The Story of Ichalkaranji

By H. GEORGE FRANKS.

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PREFACE.

The sole idea of this monograph is to give a concise and interesting account of the Founder of Ichalkaranji State and of the history and character of the subsequent rulers. Ichalkaranji, which was a small village in the eighteenth century, has now grown into a good-sized town, and is the capital of a State whose rise and growth forms one of the most romantic and thrilling tales that the annals of Maharashtra can produce One of America's most famous men found his birth in an humble cabin, and later was installed in the President's White House as Lord and Master; but here is a tale even more romantic, for it is the tale of a boy whose tenacity of purpose and whose personal bravery, encouraged by a wondrous mother-love, took him from the rudest of huts in an obscure Konkan village, first to the position of trusted companion of one of the greatest generals Maharashtra had ever produced, then to the high office of Minister of a flourishing Empire, and finally to place his name in the world's history books as the Founder of an important State.

This summarised account is based largely on the history of Ichalkaranji State written in Marathi by the late Wasudeo Shastri Khare of Miraj, who has been recognised as one of the most careful students of Mahratta history; but additional

material has been introduced as the result of other researches, although these entail no responsibility on the State either as regards facts or the conclusions drawn therefrom. Most of the spadework of this brief story was done by Professor C. G. Bhanu, to whom the most grateful thanks are given.

Mahratta history is, and always will be, full of surprises for the enterprising student; and that is why the present task has been so interesting, so romantic, and, at times, so thrilling, especially when the stirring days have been lived over again in the writer's imagination. And as for the battles of wits as well as arms of the Indian Amazons, no story is deserving of greater attention, and it is the author's only regret that in this work the doings of Maharashtra's famous women Queens could receive such scant attention.

Thanks are also due to Mr. A. D. Parasnis for permitting the reproduction of the paintings of Bajirao I, Shahu with Balaji Bajirao, and Madhavrao I from the famous Parasnis collection at Satara; whilst we also tender thanks to the Chitra Shala Press for the use of the pictures of Bajirao, Tarabai, and Mahadji Scindia.

CHAPTER I.

Naro Mahadeo Joshi.

THE earliest traces of the family of the hero of this chapter are to be found in Varwada, a small village in Ratnagiri District where for several generations there had resided an unknown and very poor Konkanasth Joshi family. Seeing few prospects ahead of him, and having in his blood that spirit of adventure and ambition which so often produces the most unexpected results, Vishwanath Pant, the grandfather of the founder of the Ichalkaranji State, left his home village in the sixteenth century, and settled down at Mhapana in Savantwadi State. To poor Vishwanath Pant, however, the change was of little consequence, and he died at Mhapana in as great poverty and obscurity as he would have done in Varwada.

His son Mahadji Pant was thereupon called to face a future which was anything but bright, and many a time he must have regarded the decision of his father to leave the village of his ancestors as only a vain attempt to better the fortunes of the family. Day after day it became more apparent that his income as an agent of the hereditary Kulkarni of Mhapana did not provide him with a living adequate for his family's needs, and his

position made it very difficult for him to find any additional means of making money. His good wife Gangabai, like all Brahmin women, tried her best to keep the household happy and contented with the small income of her husband, although the few records that are available go to show that it was often a very difficult task even to keep up that respectability which their caste demanded. Although, like so many other important facts in Mahratta history, the actual date of birth of the founder of Ichalkaranji State is shrouded with uncertainty, the evidence available seems to show that it was some time about 1663 that Gangabai gave birth to her only son Naro Pant. The birth of a son is always a memorable event in the family chronicles of Hindus, and so despite their poverty both husband and wife undoubtedly realised that they had been well blessed by the Gods, although neither of them could have realised or even imagined that their only son would carve a name for himself in Mahratta history and be the founder of an important and flourishing State. And when five years later Mahadji Pant breathed his last, the widowed Gangabai found herself faced with a mighty problem,—a problem, moreover, which few Brahmin widows would have faced with such determination and courage as she did. But she apparently was convinced that her son had a definite mission in life, although here again it is not to be imagined that her ambitious eye saw so far into

the future as to picture her fatherless son becoming a mighty soldier and a great ruler.

It cannot be said definitely whether it was Providence or sheer accident that inspired her to leave the place which was so wrapped round with the saddest of memories, but the story as it is now unveiled to us by very faded and dusty records certainly seems to suggest the pointing of the finger of Providence. Be that as it may, early in 1670 Gangabai disposed of her few household chattels and personal trinkets, and with seven-year-old Naro Pant as her chief bodyguard left Mhapana and crossed the Ghauts. It is a pity that the full story of this adventurous trip is not available, for in those days such journeying as this was accompanied by dangers and thrills even to hardened warriors. Likewise, it is left to us to guess whether Gangabai deliberately planned to set out for Kapshi or whether she merely settled down there haphazardly at the end of a long and wearying trip. But the fact remains that she could have made no better move than that which landed her at Kapshi, for that was the residence of the brave Maloji Ghorpade, one of the well-known faithful lieutenants of Shivaji.

Maloji Ghorpade was a fine Cavalry leader and had made a name which was renowned almost second to that of Shivaji Maharaja throughout the Empire which the great Emancipator of Maharashtra had built up. The great Shivaji had freed and

saved the people from religious persecution and political despotism, had united all Maharashtra into a great nation, and had opened to men of ability and ambition a vast field of endeavour in which they could work for the religious and political betterment of the Mahrattas. Maloji Ghorpade was one who readily accepted the challenge which Shivaji had thrown out to all brave subjects of Maharashtra, and he quickly placed himself in a position in which he could do valiant service for the new empire; whilst, recognising that there was a greater work to be done in the future even than had been accomplished in the past, Maloji trained each of his three sons in the arts of war and statesmanship, one of the three, Santaji Rao, especially distinguishing himself in Shivaji's Carnatic War for which he received the particular approbation of Shivaji.

It was this Santaji who first saw in the young Narayan the makings of a future soldier. Shortly after Gangabai and the boy had settled down near the camp of Maloji Ghorpade, Naro Pant showed that he was not an ordinary child. Although full of life and energy, he seemed to spurn the usual childish games and tricks, and found his greatest recreation and enjoyment in listening to the glowing and heart-stirring accounts told him by Maloji's Shilledars and Bargeers of the heroic exploits of Shivaji and his captains. No stories are more thrilling than the adventures of Tanaji Malusare and Netaji

Palkar, of Moro Pant Pingle and Baji Deshpande, and hence it is not surprising that they quickly stirred the ambition of the young Naro Pant, now known more familiarly as Narayan. When he was not listening to the exploits of the famous quartette who had done so much to help Shivaji, Narayan was either thinking of them or training himself to emulate them.

One day he requested a syce to let him mount a spirited horse. The syce hesitated, but his caution was transformed into enthusiasm by the earnest entreaties of the fearless boy. Although he had never ridden a horse before, he held the animal well in hand and made his first ride a triumph of horsemanship which was witnessed, unknown to the boy but fortunately for him, by Santaji who had been passing by and who had stopped to witness the unusual self-imposed lesson in riding. His expert eye saw with satisfaction the cleverness and enthusiasm shown by Narayan in tackling the horse, and tradition adds that he particularly admired the pluck as well as the presence of mind of the intrepid youth, which suggests that his first lesson was in all respects an exciting affair. From this time onwards Santaji took a personal interest in Narayan, and himself made arrangements for the boy to obtain all the advantages of the civil and military education which was available in those days. Narayan proved to be very intelligent, and quickly became expert in the three R's in general and in accountancy in partic-

ular. But his favourite subject was military training, and the sterner and more spartanlike it was, the better it suited the son of the brave Gangabai.

When this schooling was finished, Santaji made Narayan a trooper in his own squadron. Thrown among the hardiest of men and called upon to fend for himself, young Naro Pant, fast approaching manhood, quickly displayed smartness, intelligence, loyalty, honesty and perseverance. Santaji speedily recognised the worth of his new recruit and appreciated the solid work of the young soldier, and so he raised him step by step in the ranks until he became the Mujumdar (or accountant) of the squadron leader. In the meantime, Santaji had himself been rising in the estimation of Shivaji Maharaja, his intrepid boldness, his resourceful mind, his strictness of discipline and his unwavering loyalty being quickly noted by the Napoleon-like Shivaji; and the Subhasad Bakhar states that Shivaji on his death-bed in 1680 particularly mentioned that Santaji was one of the saviours of Maharashtra. It was under such a man as this that Naro Pant obtained his military schooling and his wordly experience, and so we find him before long accepted as the fully-trusted lieutenant—or one might even say the proud colleague—of Santaji Rao.

Shivaji died; but there did not pass away with him the spirit of independence which he had conceived and inspired,

Sambhaji, the brave son of a brave father, wasted his chances and neglected his opportunities, it is true; but even he by his reckless impulses and unfortunate vices could not smother the desire for national progress. The Mahratta nation was in no way daunted or discouraged by the tragic end of Sambhaji when he was caught in a trap by the Moghuls in 1689 and cruelly executed in the camp of Aurangzeb, the last of the great Moghul emperors not understanding, and therefore not realising, the exact character of the new empire that had grown up around Shivaji. Aurangzeb gloated over the fall of the intrepid son of the unconquerable Shivaji and naturally thought that with the death of Sambhaji the new Mahratta Kingdom would speedily die away, or at least be shattered into fragments. But once again Aurangzeb miscalculated the power and tenacity of his opponents, and sitting there in the luxury of his gorgeous camp he probably did not even dream that this very kingless kingdom of the Mahrattas would, in the not far distant future, actually shatter the foundations of his own Moghul Empire.

Shivaji had died in glory; Sambhaji had died in shame; but the spirit of independence in the subjects of Shivaji and Sambhaji glowed more brightly than ever. The duty of defending the Mahratta Kingdom was quickly realised by the great generals of Sambhaji, who were of course really the great captains drilled and disciplined under the banner of Shivaji. Amongst

these Santaji Ghorpade was one of the greatest, and served Sambhaji with as great valour and loyalty as he had given to Shivaji, his first lord and master. And in those busy days of fighting he was loyally assisted, say the family chronicles of Ichalkaranji, by Naro Pant.

It is hardly necessary to elaborate here, perhaps, the way in which the fanatic Emperor's suicidal imprudence in cruelly killing Sambhaji reacted most unexpectedly on himself and his own empire. The Mahrattas soon found that their long-cherished religion and their hard-won liberty were again in danger, and that they were faced with a return of the conditions from which Shivaji had rescued them. With such a prospect of national calamity before them, they quickly sank their personal differences and their hereditary separatist tendencies. They rallied round the standard of Rajaram, Shivaji's second son, who now sought to take up the task which Sambhaji had unfortunately refused. Pralhad Niraji, Ramchandra Nilkanth, Khando Ballal, Santaji Ghorpade, Dhanaji Jadhav and others, who pledged themselves to win or to die in the new War of Independence, unitedly advised Rajaram to become Regent of the Mahratta Kingdom during the minority of Sambhaji's son Shivaji, later so well known as Shahu Maharaj. These statesmen and generals solemnly promised their combined support to Rajaram in view of the fact that his Regency had

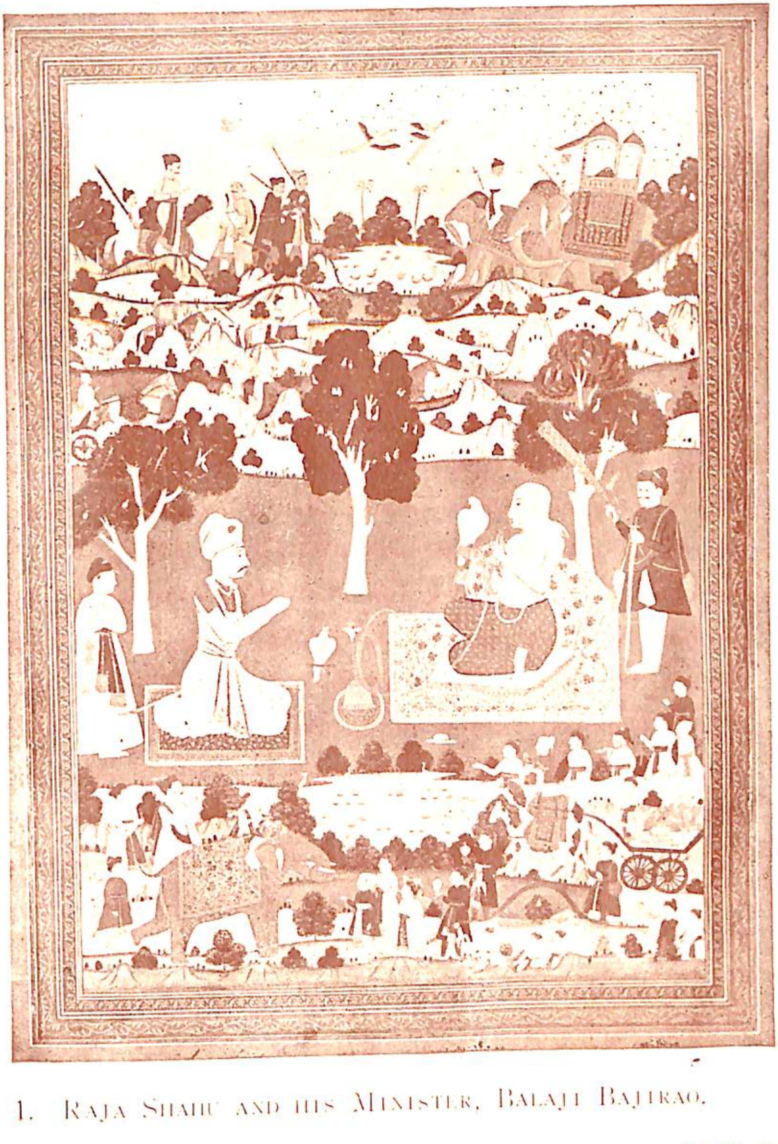
become a political necessity.

Rajaram rose to the occasion in a remarkable way, for whilst he was as brave as his elder brother Sambhaji had been, those who came in contact with him recognised that he was less vicious and far more considerate. His masterly discernment in choosing reliable men for posts of responsibility and trust brought to the fore all the noble qualities that have always naturally distinguished the Mahrattas, but which have all too often been allowed to remain uncultivated or even deliberately repressed. Thus it was that the eventful period of twenty years, stretching from 1687 to 1707, definitely established that great kingdom whose foundations had been laid by Shivaji, and, in spite of the fortunes, power and prestige of the Moghuls and the ambitious Aurangzeb, it was in this brilliant period that Mahratta statesmen and military leaders proposed and carried out operations which will always redound to the credit of Maharashtra.

Among the foremost of these great men were Santaji Rao and Naro Pant, working in conjunction with Ramchandra Nilkanth and Dhanaji Rao. In this War of Independence, the tactics of guerilla warfare which had been introduced by Shivaji were perfected by Santaji and Dhanaji Rao, and it was this method of fighting that finally brought about the defeat of the so-called invincible army of Aurangzeb and that raised the

Mahratta Kingdom into the victorious Mahratta Confederacy of the eighteenth century. Santaji's masterful movements (as described by such authorities as Grant Duff, Kincaid, and Sardesai), his wonderful strategies, his strictness of discipline and his unswerving loyalty to the cause of his country are now generally admitted to have been largely responsible for the success which accompanied the army under the Mahratta banner, and in all his activities Santaji was loyally supported by Naro Pant who displayed both wisdom in planning operations and courage in their execution. That is to say, Naro Pant, who but a bare twenty years before had been a fatherless urchin trudging over the bleak Ghauts with a sorrowing penniless mother, was now one of the leading men of the Mahratta Empire, and his success is all the more praiseworthy because it was achieved without influence and without favouritism, being due solely to the inspiration of the mother's love and the enthusiasm of the youth's ambition. Not only was he the faithful lieutenant of the famous general Santaji Rao, but his activities in the world of politics produced a relationship between Naro Pant and Ramchandra Pant which ripened into a great friendship and withstood the crucial tests of the days of greatest misfortunes.

Naro Pant's most striking qualities were his devotion and his honesty. These characteristics were mainly responsible for



1. RAJA SHAHU AND HIS MINISTER, BALAJI BAJIRAO.

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the trust reposed in him from the start of his career by Santaji Rao, who was now the Commander-in-Chief of the Mahratta Forces; and they were marked in course of time by all other Mahratta leaders. Santaji Rao finally entrusted to Naro Pant the sole management of the accounts of the army and of his own personal Jagheer, and it soon became obvious that the master loved his servant as well as, if not more than, he would love his own son. On one occasion, says tradition, Dwarkabai the wife of Santaji Rao asked Naro Pant to eat food from the plate of Santaji in order to prove, according to the Mahratta custom, that Naro was Santaji's son. Brahmin as he was, Naro Pant showed himself ready to comply and to sacrifice his all for his benefactor. But Santaji Rao stepped in and said that there was no need for Naro Pant to do such a thing when it was so generally recognised in every other way that he was a member of the family, although the incident undoubtedly won for Naro Pant the still greater esteem and love of his patron and Dwarkabai. In due course this loving relationship was definitely expressed when Naro Pant adopted Santaji Rao's surname Ghorpade for himself and his family, thus becoming a real nobleman and a member of the aristocracy. This was as great a gift on the part of Santaji as it was an honour for Naro Pant, and the latter, like a dutiful son, in course of time repaid a hundredfold his obligations to Santaji, as this story will show.

The successes of the Mahrattas, in both political and military spheres, were fast bringing about the total defeat of the Moghul forces. From 1690 to 1697, the co-operation of Santaji Rao and Dhanaji Rao was responsible for military operations of a unique character, whilst the political leadership of the redoubtable Ramchandra Nilkanth (perhaps with the advice and the assistance of Naro Pant) resulted in Maharashtra Proper being freed from Moghul onslaughts and from the possibility of further Moghul inroads. Santaji Rao and Dhanaji Rao were enemies whose very names struck terror to the Moghul army, and had these two great generals been able to carry on their united plans of offence and defence there is no imagining how different the Mahratta history of the succeeding years would have been. But unfortunately they could not agree, and so there entered into Mahratta politics that spirit of separatism which has so often undone the excellent work of all great leaders of all countries. Santaji's straightforwardness and his sense of discipline were apparently unacceptable to Dhanaji who was a powerful leader of the cavalry, but who was always called upon to act under the orders of Santaji, the Commander-in-Chief. Santaji, moreover, often let his straightforwardness be expressed with a bluntness which could perhaps be regarded as mild insolence, and it seems that both the King, Rajaram Maharaj, and the Prime Mi-

nister, Ramchandra Pant, disliked Santaji for this very reason. They therefore gave their moral support to Dhanaji, and for some time a series of intrigues was carried out between Rajaram Maharaj, Ramchandra Pant and Dhanaji. Certain efforts were made to bring about a compromise and to prevent a definite rupture, but they all failed, and ultimately a treacherous scheme arranged by Santaji's enemies resulted in his downfall and death.

One day (it is said at the suggestion of the King), Dhanaji Rao surprised Santaji and his men, defeated them in battle, and would have actually captured the Commander-in-Chief on the battlefield had not Santaji, Naro Pant, and a few faithful followers fled from the scene of treacherous action. For a time this unhappy band wandered from place to place and endeavoured to shake off the pursuit of their enemies, but at last poor Santaji, who had given his all to the nation, was inveigled into a trap by the artful wife of Mane, Deshmukh of Mhaswad, who had long been seeking an opportunity to revenge herself on Santaji for having ordered her husband to suffer the extreme penalty of being trampled to death by an elephant as punishment for deliberate treason against the Mahrattas in the invasion of the Moghuls at Chandi Chundawar. Her time came when Santaji was in flight from Rajaram and Dhanaji, and when he was trapped in 1698 through her schemings he was

murdered in cold blood. Verily a sad end for such a great patriot and gallant soldier.

Naro Pant was not present with his leader when the foul deed was committed, but on learning of it he at once hastened to the spot, arranged for all the necessary obsequies to be performed, called Dwarkabai and Santaji's relatives together, and took them to a place of safety, urging them not to be discouraged or overcome with dismay by the untimely death of the great Mahratta general. It was from now onwards that Naro Pant had the opportunity to repay the goodness of Santaji to him in his early days, and he demonstrated how dutiful a son he could be by becoming the mainstay of the Ghorpade family which had fallen on such evil days.

Although apparently having thrust upon him the position of a losing cause, Naro Pant did not hesitate for one moment as to his future plans. He immediately created an independent army under the standard of the Ghorpades, and it quickly became evident that he had organised a fine fighting machine. Perhaps because he did not wish further to intensify the internal troubles of the Mahrattas, or perhaps because he wished first of all to try out his strength on an enemy of his country rather than on his fellow-countrymen, Naro Pant first concentrated his efforts against the Moghuls, and repeatedly defeated them in the Districts of Bijapur and Gulbarga. A careful study of all

the records available on this point seems to show that Grant Duff is not correct when he says that from 1698 to 1705 the Ghorpades were fighting for their own aggrandisement. It is admitted that Mr. Sardesai, generally regarded as a very careful student of Mahratta history, agrees with Grant Duff in this opinion; and while it is not perhaps worth while or necessary to examine here all the arguments for and against this opinion, it should be mentioned that a sanad was granted in 1703-04 by Shivaji the son of Tarabai, Regent of the Mahratta Kingdom, to Piraji Ghorpade, the legal descendant of Santaji, reaffirming the grant of all Watans and cash allowances granted to his father. This sanad has been quoted in full by Khare in his History of Ichalkaranji State, and from it there is no doubt that those at the head of affairs in Maharashtra recognised that in the Ghorpade family they had friends and not enemies. Likewise it should be noted that it was Naro Pant who successfully induced Dwarkabai and her young son Piraji Rao to take an active part in the great national war which followed the death of Santaji, and it was his vigilant activity and efficient administration during that troublous time that raised the status of the Ghorpade family to its former level. His services were ultimately recognised by the Mahratta Government, and Bhilawadi, a village on the River Krishna, was granted in Inam to him personally and a Mansab of five hundred horse was

awarded to his young son Venkatrao in the same year (1703-04), although at that time Venkatrao was only two years old. These facts, coupled with many more that could be cited, certainly go to show that Naro Pant's activities by no means neglected the interests of the Mahratta Empire.

But while Naro Pant was fighting for the reputation of the family which had adopted him and was daily increasing the reputation of his own name, his worldly prosperity produced the fullest happiness. A Hindu does not think he has a home if he has no children, and so Naro Pant and his amiable wife Laxmibai continually lamented that they had not been blessed with any issue. Time after time they had made religious vows, and week after week they had performed deeds of charity, apparently all to no purpose. But at last in 1701 Laxmibai presented a son to Naro Pant, who decided to call the boy Venkatrao because Haribhat Patwardhan, a saintly Brahmin and the ancestor of the famous Patwardhan Chiefs, had advised Naro Pant and Laxmibai to pray to Venkoba of Giri for the blessing of a son. Naro Pant had learned of the powers of the Giri deity while he was fighting the Moghuls in the Carnatic under Santaji Rao, and so when Haribat Patwardhan advised Laxmibai to make special prayers to this deity, Naro Pant strongly supported his counsel. Laxmibai therefore went to Giri and devoutedly worshipped Venkoba, praying for the gift

of a son. Not only was the gift memorialized by the name of the deity being incorporated into the name of the Ghorpade family, but from that day onwards Naro Pant accepted Venkoba of Giri as his family God. This is remembered up to the present time by the annual observance of Navratra festival in the month of Ashwin in honour of Shri Venkoba and by the Ruling family of Ichalkaranji reciting the name of this deity every meal-time.

During the minority of Piraji, the eldest son of Santaji Rao, the Deshmukhi and Sardeshmukhi of Miraj Prant were administered by Naro Pant on behalf of the family. The Mokasa Ammals of Ichalkaranji, Ajra, Arag, and Mane Rajuri had also been granted to him by Santaji Ghorpade. Then in 1697-98 Naro Pant added to the area under his administration by purchasing the Kulkarni Watan of Mhapan, the place of his birth, the whole village subsequently being granted to him in Inam by the Sardesai of Savantwadi.

The year 1707 saw, to the great relief of most Mahrattas, the death of Aurangzeb, the great antagonist of the Hindu religion. On his death there was considerable doubt as to the line of action which would be adopted against the Mahrattas by his successor, Azim Shah. But all doubts were speedily dissolved when Azim Shah released from prison Shivaji, otherwise known as Shahu, the son of Sambhaji, the murdered

Mahratta. Looking at this incident, however, with that perspective which time gives, it is now evident that the release was only a clever diplomatic move intended to sow the seeds of dissension amongst Rajaram the son of Shivaji and Sambhaji's son Shahu, both of whom were the grandsons of the great Shivaji Maharaj. Shahu, however, represented the eldest branch and as such was, according to the Institutes of Manu, entitled to the throne. But then, as now, possession was generally looked upon as nine points of the law, and as Rajaram's son Shivaji was in actual possession of the throne, the astute Moghul Emperor shrewdly believed that the release of the legal claimant to the throne of Maharashtra would produce a fratricidal war which would immediately weaken and ultimately shatter the strength of those people whom Aurangzeb the Great had found unconquerable.

As anticipated by Azim Shah, the return of Shahu provoked a civil war in Maharashstra. The cause of a man who has a legal claim on something which he lost through no fault of his own is always a popular one, and so many important Mahratta leaders, such as the Bhosles, Dabhades and Chimnaji Damodar, flocked to his banner. The other side was supported by Parashram Trimbak Pratinidhi, the Ghorpades, Thorats, Chavans, Kanoji Angria and others who believed it their duty to obey the call of the King in time of peril. With both sides

strongly supported and well organised, plans were laid for a decisive battle, the site selected being Kheda. On the eve of the battle, however, Dhanaji Jadhav, the general commanding the forces of Tarabai and Shivaji, changed sides, and his defection to Shahu turned the scale in the latter's favour. In the course of a vigorous battle, Shivaji was defeated and routed. Following such a victory, Shahu for a time met with little opposition, and pursued his conquering career all over Maharashtra. But after a little time Tarabai gathered together a few scattered forces and put up a steady and lengthy resistance. In order to secure more troops she granted Inams freely, but even the loyal efforts of Ramchandra Pant and Parashram Pant were of no avail to the brave queen who was fighting so valiantly for the cause of her son Shivaji the Second. Shahu was successful on all occasions, and within two years was able to capture for himself more than half of the country ruled over by Shivaji and Tarabai.

Leaving for a time the smoke and din of battle, it will be interesting to trace the religious side of the life of Naro Pant. In 1709-10 he performed the thread ceremony of his only son Venkatrao, who was then nine years old. The ritual was led by Haribhat Patwardhan and it was on this occasion that this saintly Brahmin was granted the family priesthood of Naro Pant. Haribhat personally took part in the recitation of the

Vedic Mantras on that occasion, which reveals a very close relationship between the Ichalkaranji family and that of the Patwardhan Chiefs of the Southern Mahratta Country whose ancestor Haribhat was. Following the thread ceremony, Haribhat Patwardhan was definitely and regularly patronised by Naro Pant, and took up his residence at Bahirewadi with his patron. Shortly after this, Naro Pant was successful in inducing Piraji Rao Ghorpade to assign the Sardeshmukhi of the Panhala District to Venkatrao, and Trimbak Hari Patwardhan was appointed to his son's Dewan. It was at this time also that the Deshmukhi of Ajra was granted to Naro Pant by Bahiraji Hindurao Ghorpade. The villages in the District of Ajra must have been assigned to Naro Pant about 1712 to meet the expenses of the army of the Ghorpades of Kapshi. It also seems certain that about this time Ramchandra Pant Amatya obtained for Naro Pant the Office of Pant Sachiva of Kolhapur which had fallen vacant by the death of Shankraji Narayan.

Thus it was that by one of the most curious turns of the wheel of fortune, in the next year 1713 Naro Pant Ghorpade, once a poor village urchin but now one of the Ministers of Kolhapur, was the leading figure in the marriage of his son Venkatrao to Anubai, the youngest daughter of Balaji Vishwanath Bhat, who soon after became the Prime Minister of Shahu Maharaj. This Balaji Vishwanath Bhat, the Deshmukh

of Shriwardhan in the North of Konkan, had crossed the Ghauts and obtained service in the Mahratta Army under Dhanaji Jadhav. His wise yet fearless counsels to Dhanajirao and Shahu were very largely responsible for the slow but steady advance of the cause of Shahu Maharaj, and Rajwade in his essays actually states that had it not been for Balaji, history would have recorded Shahu Maharaj as a king without a kingdom. It is not surprising, therefore, that Shahu quickly appreciated the services of Balaji Vishwanath Pant whose advice had been as loyal as it was successful. Balaji was promoted successively to high places of trust and responsibility, finally reaching the top of the ladder of political progress in 1714 when Shahu made him his Mukhya Pradhan, that is, Prime Minister, or Peishwa.

Returning now to the internal politics of Maharashtra, we find that the civil war continued with increased activity. There seems, for some inexplicable reason, considerable difference of opinion regarding the actual events of this era. Some historians maintain that the mad Shivaji, son of Tarabai, was deposed and imprisoned with his mother as a result of a palace intrigue at Panhala led by Ramchandra Pant; whilst other historians insist that Shivaji died of small-pox at the end of 1712 and that on his death Sambhaji was placed on the throne by Ramchandra Pant who imprisoned Tarabai and Bhavanibai. In view of this

important difference of opinion, it is not perhaps necessary to make any definite statement here as to how Sambhaji was placed on the Musnud at Panhala. But it is evident that in these stirring events the Ghorpade family played a very important part, for it is about this time that further honours were heaped upon them. Ramchandra Pant apparently induced Sambhaji to transfer the office of Sennapati from Bahiraji of Gajendragad to Piraji Ghorpade of Kapshi; but as Piraji was young and comparatively inexperienced, the heavy duties of the military administration actually fell upon Naro Pant who, although Sachiv, also became *de facto* Sennapati. Naro Pant, as the right-hand man and a sharer in the privileges, dignities and rights of Santaji Rao Ghorpade, thus obtained the honour of using his own Naubat (Kettle drum) and Jari Patka (Banner) and was also given the title of Mamlakat Madar. It might also be added that the grant of Bahirewadi was made to Naro Punt by Lakham Gouda Bassa Prabhu Desai in 1715 in his own name, whereas that of Shippur was granted by Sidappa Desai Sir Naik of Hukeri in 1714 who had a Sanad made out in the name of Naro Pant's son Venkatrao.

So stirring were these days and so uncertain were the happenings that the historians of the time seem to have paid little attention to the task of recording for posterity certain important details regarding the leaders of the contending sides.

It is not definitely known, for example, when Naro Pant actually died, but Khare thinks that his decease took place some time between 1718 and 1720. He left behind him his wife Laxmibai, his son Venkatrao, and a host of faithful followers and admirers to mourn his loss.

In the foregoing paragraphs an attempt has been made to give a brief account of Naro Pant's eventful career, although it is admitted that the meagre nature of this account barely suffices to reveal in detail the outstanding qualities of his character. Yet sufficient has probably been said to indicate the sterling worth of the faithful services he gratefully rendered to Santaji Rao Ghorpade in times both of weal and woe. His unstinting support to Santaji Rao's sons at a time when they most needed the advice of an experienced and trusted statesman, his efficient and economic administration, his judicious way of obtaining Haks and Ammals, his bravery and strategy on the battle-field, and his tactfulness and wisdom in the council chamber,—all these show beyond doubt that Naro Pant, the founder of the Ichalkaranji State, was a man of outstanding abilities, great mentality and energetic determination, a man at once trustworthy, prudent and tactful. As we ring down the curtain on the life of this great man, no one will refuse to join in tribute to a son of Maharashtra who arrived at Bahirewadi on the Ghauts a helpless urchin and died a nobleman of the first rank.

CHAPTER II.

Venkatrao Narayan.

When Naro Pant died his son Venkatrao Narayan was in age barely seventeen or eighteen years, although in experience he was probably equal to many of the great men of his day. He had been closely allied with his father in all his activities from a very early age, and had undoubtedly been well primed not only in the part he would have to play in the future but also in the methods that were in those days adopted to bring about prosperity and power. It will be recalled that he was son-in-law of Balaji Pant Nanna, the Prime Minister of the Satara King, as well as the prime mover in forming, developing, and consolidating the Mahratta Confederacy. Such a relationship naturally facilitated the rise of the young man in the Satara Government, even if the reputation and record of his father's great work had not been regarded as a reason for special favours to be distributed to the son. Several opportunities were offered to young Venkatrao Narayan to distinguish himself, and this chapter will show what advantage he took of these opportunities.

On the death of Naro Pant, Piraji Rao Ghorpade, the son of Santaji, had paid the usual visit of condolence to the family at Bahirewadi; and he took advantage of his visit to confirm

all the Inams, Haks and Ammals granted during the lifetime of Naro Pant by Santaji Ghorpade. Probably in the next year, Shirdhan was granted to Venkatrao in Inam. In the following year, 1723, Sanads were issued for Mane Rajuri, Mhapana, Arag and Nandani. Mativade also was probably given in this year and Uttur granted in 1724. In addition to these gifts of land and revenue, Shahu Maharaj in 1724 assigned a Military Saranjam to Venkatrao with the exalted title of Mamlakat Madar, and asked him to serve under Baji Rao who was denominated Peishwa in 1720, after the death of Balaji Pant Nanna. It appears that Balaji had been able to secure an Imperial Sanad empowering Shahu Maharaj and his Sirdars to levy Chouth and Sirdeshmukhi in all the Imperial Subhas. His son Baji Rao, a Mahratta leader second only in importance and influence to Shivaji Maharaj, took every possible advantage of this Imperial Sanad, and in the course of a comparatively short period considerably developed the Mahratta Kingdom. It was his vigorous policy that gradually led to the shifting of the political centre of gravity in Maharashtra from Satara to Poona.

Venkatrao, therefore, attracted to the latter place, spent a certain period every year in Poona with his wife Anubai at a fine house erected by Baji Rao for his brother-in-law. The Peishwa then assigned to him the revenue of Vadgaon Turf Chakan (Turf, a group of villages) and two large garden

areas in the vicinity of Poona. Venkatrao's activities and responsibilities, however, were so great that he could not definitely settle down in Poona, and so the records show that he made frequent visits to Bahirewadi not only to realise and supervise his own Haks and Ammals, but also to give advice to Ranoji, the son of Piraji Rao Ghorpade. These visits, moreover, were not merely friendly trips but also had a political significance. The villages in the districts from which Venkatrao collected his revenue were in the neighbourhood of the newly-created Kolhapur Raj, and he frequently found it necessary to conciliate that Ruler and to keep on terms of the utmost friendliness. The Maharaja of Kolhapur had, in a weak moment, made common cause with the Mahommedan Subhedar of Hyderabad, believing that by such an alliance he could at least curb the growing power of Shahu Maharaj if not defeat him altogether. Kolhapur was supported by Chandra Rao Jadhav, Nimbalkar and other well-known leaders, but the Maharaja found that he was hoist with his own petard in making an alliance with such a strong neighbour. The Subhedar of Hyderabad (that is, the Nizam) took upon himself the role of a special arbitrator, announcing that he would give an impartial decision as to whether Shahu or Sambhaji was the legal claimant. Such a suggestion was regarded both by Shahu and Baji Rao as an insult and, as is usual in all cases of national affront, the



2. BAJIRAO I, AS A WARRIOR.

[2 *Facing page* 32.

insult could only be wiped out in blood. A battle was fought in which the Nizam was surprised, defeated and compelled in 1728 to sue for peace. The army of the Kolhapur Durbar was once again shattered, and although the Nizam refused to hand over Sambhaji to Baji Rao, it was agreed that Sambhaji should go to Panhala on condition that he broke his alliance with the Nizam and promised not to side with him again.

Sambhaji returned to Panhala much depressed by the defeat he had sustained and the treaty he had to sign with the Peishwa. Udaijirao Chawhan, however, induced him not to lose heart but to muster all his Sardars and the army and give another battle to Shahu. Orders were accordingly issued to all the Sardars to join the royal standard with their armies. The attitude of the Kolhapur Durbar in joining hands so unpolitically with the Nizam had alienated Venkatrao from Kolhapur, although his unfriendliness towards Kolhapur naturally affected him in the collection of the revenue from his lands and villages which were adjacent to the Kolhapur kingdom, and the results of that unfriendliness and the pressing request of Udaijirao Chawhan were probably the final reasons for Venkatrao joining in Sambhaji's expedition against Shahu in 1730.

The Kolhapur army encamped on the banks of the river Warna. As soon as this move of Kolhapur reached the ears of Shahu, he sent a large army under the command of Shripatrao

Pratinidhi, who took Sambhaji unawares and forced a pitched battle. The forces of Kolhapur were completely routed, and both Sambhaji and his adviser Chawhan fled from the battle field. The zenana of the King and his ministers were captured and taken to Satara as war prisoners. Among the latter were Bhagwantrao, the son of Ramchandra Pant Amatya of Bavada and Venkatrao Ghorpade of Ichalkaranji. The Kolhapur Durbar obtained the release of his Pant Amatya by paying the usual ransom to Satara, but took no steps whatever to ransom his Pant Sachiva. Venkatrao was ultimately ransomed by his brother-in-law, Bajirao Peishwa.

Although after the battle of 1728, Venkatrao had partially severed his relations with Kolhapur, the 1730 incident completely alienated him from Kolhapur, and he publicly recognised Shahu Maharaja as his political superior. Shahu also was not slow to reward the allegiance of his new Sardar. He increased his military Saranjam from 500 to 700 troops and for its maintenance the villages of Kadlas, Papari and Bedag were assigned to him in addition to his former Jahageer. Shahu Maharaja also gave him a site in the Satara City on which Venkatrao built a Wada, and the portion of the town (Peith) in which it stands is still known in Satara as Venkatpura.

After the crushing defeat sustained at Warna, Sambhaji had no other alternative but to accept the terms that were

offered by Shahu for recognising him as the head of the Kolhapur Principality. In this connection, it will perhaps be interesting to quote what one leading historian has to say about the Treaty of Krishna Warna concluded in 1730 which reduced the Kolhapur Principality into a Feudatory State of the Satara Kingdom. This is what Mr. C. A. Kincaid says on this Treaty:—

"The clauses of the treaty did not err on the side of undue leniency. Their wording showed that the treaty was dictated by a superior to an inferior, and converted Sambhaji from an independent sovereign to a prince in subordinate alliance to Shahu and completely cut off Sambhaji from the North. He could only extend his dominions southwards and even then he bound himself to hand over his conquests to Shahu. Sambhaji never again carried on war against the suzerain, but he often grumbled with the clearness of the Warna Treaty and had made various efforts to get it modified. In 1734 and 1741 he went with his queen to Satara to try to win over Shahu to leniency, but in vain."

It was in this year that Venkatrao became a Sardar of Shahu, and in the Ichalkaranji State records there are several sanads issued by Shahu Maharaj in the name of Venkatrao together with several letters from Baji Rao asking Venkatrao and his village officers to resist to the full Udhaji Chawhan, the

free-lance soldier serving under Kolhapur. Having by this time fully demonstrated his own sterling abilities and a reproduction of the military spirit of his father, Venkatrao was informed by Shahu Maharaj that the latter thought of granting anew to him the Deshmukhi and Sirdeshmukhi of Miraj Prant and Panhala. Gratefully acknowledging the signal honour, the chivalrous Venkatrao, however, emulated the example of his father in placing first the rights and privileges of the Ghorpade family, and so the records reveal that he induced the Maharaja to issue his sanads in the name of Ranoji Ghorpade who was then representing the Ghorpades of Kapshi. Naturally Ranoji appreciated this very generous act at its full value and in return made a free gift of those Haks to Venkatrao in perpetuity. Then in 1735 he granted him the village of Rangoli in inam. With such large estates from which he drew his revenues and with a growing importance as a Mahratta general, leader, and statesman, Venkatrao decided to establish a definite seat, and he ultimately selected Ichalkaranji as his home, where he built a fort in 1739 with the loyal co-operation and assistance of his subjects.

It might here be mentioned in passing that it is practically certain that the happy termination to the Kapshikar Ghorpade's migration to Satara as a protest against the ill-treatment of Kolhapur Maharajah was very largely due to Venkatrao's

influence with the Shahu, this being yet another instance of the way in which the family repaid in overflowing measure the initial help and encouragement meted out to Naro Pant by his first Patron, the Kapshikar Ghorpades.

Yet it was not to be expected that he would be able in such unsettled days to spend long periods in his family residence. At that time a war broke out between the Mahrattas and the Portuguese, and records show that although Venkatrao was present in person with the whole of his followers in Baji Rao's celebrated campaigns in Malwa, Bhopal and Bundelkhand, his greatest exploits were achieved nearer home when he assisted Baji Rao against the European aggressors. The Portuguese had taken possession of the western coast of Maharashtra early in the seventeenth century and had quickly established themselves as a fairly powerful maritime nation. But the greatest danger to Maharashtra in those days was not the establishment of a new nation's commercial activities but any efforts that might be made to take a new religion along with merchandise on all trade routes whether by sea or land. It was not long before the Hindus on the western coast of Maharashtra realised that that their very religion was in danger, for the Jesuit's work of conversion to Christianity was fast proving successful. On being appealed to, Baji Rao and his brother Chimnaji Appa strongly and vigorously supported the cause of the Konkan

people and declared war against Portugal in 1737-38. Venkatrao quickly realised the difficult task Baji Rao would have in attacking a highly-organised European army, and so he urged the Peishwa to create a strong diversion to threaten the safety of the Goa Territory by thus taking the war right into the heart of the enemy's country. Venkatrao believed the Portuguese Government would not only be handicapped but would probably even be paralysed by this move, and he had so much faith in his policy that he offered to lead such an expedition against Goa, an offer which was gratefully accepted by Baji Rao who despatched him south with a powerful army. Further realising that the Mahrattas would need the cooperation of those important States which lay between Baji Rao's capital and the metropolis of the Portuguese, the Maharaja succeeded in persuading the ruling Chiefs of Savantwadi and Sunda to join with him actively in the war. This further piece of strategy naturally prevented the Portuguese Government from sending men and supplies from Goa to their northern possessions in the Konkan, which were rapidly reduced and captured by Chimnaji Appa in 1738. Ceasing activities as usual during the rains, Venkatrao is found resuming his operations against the Portuguese in the following year, one especially brilliant feat amongst many episodes being the way in which he besieged, stormed and captured the forts of Fonda and Mandangad, reduced Sashti

and Bardesh which were two talukas near Goa, and actually threatened Goa itself. With the Mahrattas at their doors, the Portuguese Government showed the greatest alarm, more especially as they could not relieve the pressure on their troops at Bassein and other places in the North. Venkatrao's scheme had proved entirely successful and when the Portuguese Government were attacked with fear, he consolidated his position by seizing a number of forts and strategical places, whilst these activities in the south enabled Chimnaji Appa to capture the almost impregnable Fort at Bassein, to reduce the whole of the northern Konkan, and place that territory once again under the Mahratta rule.

It was on this occasion that a most curious incident occurred which is worth requoting from Kincaid who has dug it out of some old Portuguese records. Referring to the Treaty between the Portuguese and the Mahrattas in which the former agreed to give the Mahrattas a site for a factory on Salsette Island, Kincaid says:—

"The site was to be chosen by the General of the North. Unhappily for the Portuguese, the General of the North was at the time Luis Botelho, the Viceroy's nephew. He was a young man of parts and courage, but of a violent temper. He had already quarrelled with the Jesuits and with many of the leading citizens of Bassein. When he learned that he had to select in-

side Salsette a site for a Mahratta factory, he resolved not do it. For a long time he put off the Mahrattas with fair promises. At last Bajirao, suspecting his good faith, sent to Botelho as his special envoy his brother-in-law, Venkatrao Joshi, better known as Venkatrao Ghorpade, the distinguished ancestor of the present Chief of Ichalkaranji. Venkatrao was ordered to demand from Luis Botelho the instant cession of the promised site. Luis Botelho, unable any longer to put off the fulfilment of the Viceroy's promises, lost his temper and so far forgot not only the courtesies of diplomacy but those of ordinary social life as to call, to Venkatrao's face, the handsome and fairskinned Bajirao a negro. Venkatrao at once broke off the interview and returned to Bajirao who, deeply incensed, determined to avenge the insult without delay."—*History of the Mahrattas, Vol. II, pp.* 249-251.

Thanks to Venkatrao, therefore, history has recorded the unique story of the Mahrattas defeating a European nation in both of two sections of one vigorous campaign, a defeat which the Portuguese ultimately admitted when they paid a large tribute to the Mahratta Government as outlined so graphically by Mr. Gordon, the English Ambassador at the Satara Court, in his account of this Mahratta Campaign. Had the Mahrattas always showed such ability, how different would history have been!

On returning so victorious from the siege of Goa and going to communicate his good success to King Shahu who was then at Miraj besieging that fort, the King went out himself to meet Venkatrao and gave him a royal reception befitting his rank and his prowess. And for his splendid service, Shahu Maharaj granted in Jagheer to Venkatrao the whole of the territory that had been reduced by him in his southern campaign, whilst Venkatrao further obtained from Sambhaji Maharaj, the King of Kolhapur, the Kamavishi of all the territories belonging to the Kolhapur State in the neighbourhood of this new jagheer in return for the safety that had been ensured to Kolhapur territory. The King of Kolhapur also gave Sulkud, Takali, and two Shiradyads in inam to Venkatrao in 1739.

With barely a year's respite from fighting, Venkatrao was several times ordered between 1740 and 1743 to co-operate with Balaji Baji Rao, the third Peishwa, in Shahu's campaigns in the north. At this time the Mahratta Empire found itself occasionally pestered by the fresh ambitions of Jijabai, the ambitious Queen of the Kolhapur Raja, and she it was who apparently inaugurated the suicidal policy of reducing the power and prestige of the feudatory Jagheerdars of Kolhapur, although at that time the policy met with little success. In 1742 she demanded inam Tijai (that is, one-third of the revenue of the inam grant)

from Venkatrao, a demand which was determinedly refused by him on the grounds that it was wholly illegal. This provoked an invasion of Ichalkaranji by Arjhoji Yadava, a Kolhapur Sardar, as a result of which a number of skirmishes took place between the two States in which the forces of Venkatrao were always successful. But probably owing to his troubled life, and unfortunately for his family and for the Mahratta Confederacy, symptoms of consumption manifested themselves at this time. The ravages of the disease quickly told even on the robust frame of Venkatrao, and from 1743 he seemed to lose all interest in the affairs of the State and of his own personal activities. Despite all efforts, both medical and religious, no improvement was registered, and after sinking week by week, he succumbed to the fell disease in 1745, breathing his last at Sadalage, a village near Ichalkaranji.

In many respects Venkatrao was like his father, Naro Pant. His active career, both civil and military, between 1720 and 1745 very plainly reveals that he was an able general, a judicious councillor and a careful administrator. His great masterpiece was his expedition against Goa, but he had previously gained and maintained a high position of honour and prestige in the Durbars of Satara and the Peishwa. He was held in high esteem by all classes of people, although of course it was Shahu Maharaj who was able to shower honours upon him for his

services to the Mahratta State. By Shahu he was raised to the enviable rank of a first class Sardar in the Mahratta Army, an honour which meant more than raising him still further amongst the nobility of the country, inasmuch as it showed that he was no longer in any way subordinate to Kolhapur. Whenever he went to the Satara Durbar, Shahu Maharaj received him standing, the title of Mamlakat Madar always being recognised by Shahu. Following the custom of those days by which an important Sardar like Venkatrao was present in person, Venkatrao accompanied the Peishwa whenever he led an expedition, and subsequent events showed how fortunate it was for Baji Rao that he had by his side such an able soldier as Venkatrao. Although Naro Pant had brilliantly laid the foundations of the Ichalkaranji State, it was left to his son to erect the edifice, and Venkatrao by his ability, his discretion, and his valour was solely responsible for further raising the status of the Ichalkaranji State. His astute father, Naro Pant, had died an inamdar and a military commander under a well-known general of Shivaji Maharaj, whereas the brave son died a first-class Sardar who had been himself the leader of a brilliant military campaign, the strategy of which was inspired and planned by himself. He left behind him his son Narayan, aged 20, and his wife Anubai, the story of whom will be recounted in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III.

Narayan Venkatrao.

It is very seldom that one finds in history a long line of excellent administrators descending from father to son, and hence it is not surprising to see that Venkatrao, the brilliant son of the brilliant father, was succeeded by a ruler who did not live up to the reputation of his immediate forbears. Narayan Venkatrao, popularly known as Tatya Saheb Ghorpade, was not an able campaigner or a wise administrator like his father, even though every opportunity had been taken by his father when he was alive to initiate him into the art of good administration. For a reason for which it is difficult to account, Narayan took very little intelligent interest in the affairs of the State which his father had bequeathed him. History records that he was a man of energy and of courage, and it is obvious that if he had wished he could have made of himself a splendid administrator who would have earned for his family still greater honours to add to those which had been bestowed on his father by the Peishwa.

There are some who say that the peculiar character of Narayan Venkatrao was very largely the product of his early up-bringing, for, as the only son of Venkatrao and Anubai, it seems probable that he was humoured too much and that the

usual precocity of an only child was allowed to develop without being checked. This may have been due, of course, to the fact that his father was so often away from home and from his family, but nevertheless it was unfortunate for the new State which was being founded that its youthful ruler should not have been trained in the same school of experience and administration as that in which Naro Pant had taught the one who was to carry on his great initial work. In dignity and in social standing, young Narayanrao was a thorough nobleman, but his fiery passion and stubborn will quickly developed in him a haughty temperament which finally brought about his own ruin and well-nigh encompassed the ruin of Ichalkaranji State. Had it not been for his mother Anubai, a noble lady of vigorous ambition and abundant resources, the impulsive youth might have undone all the good which the hard work and courageous enthusiam of his father and grandfather had achieved. There are evidences to show that his unfortunate characteristics of uncontrolled anger and wilful stubbornness were neither apparent nor marked in his early days, and thus it was not until he himself took over the reins of Government and was called upon to administer a new State in a very difficult period that his utter inability and incapacity were discovered.

Yet although the son of Venkatrao was a disappointment as far as character was concerned, the heritage of wisdom, tact

and courage which his father had left to the State manifested itself most fortunately not only in Anubai and her nephews Nana Saheb Peishwa and Bhau Saheb, but also in the civil and military officers of the Ichalkaranji State. That is to say, the whole administration, apart from its tutelar head, still functioned in the same way as it did when controlled by Venkatrao, with the result that not only did the State remain intact despite the apathy and carelessness of its young ruler, but actually increased its power and prestige because the shortcomings of Narayan Venkatrao were more or less shielded by the excellent work of his administrators. There were for a time few indications of the Ichalkaranji State not progressing equally as well under its new ruler as it had under the brave statesman who wore himself out on its behalf. And history records that the Peishwa Nana Saheb sought in many ways to assist the fortunes of the rising Principality. He confirmed Sanads of the Military Saranjams of the Ruler, granted additional Inams from time to time, sanctioned special cash allowances, and gave to Tatya Saheb Ghorpade positions of trust and emoluments. In the Carnatic campaigns of Nana Saheb Peishwa and his cousin Bhau Saheb, the Ichalkaranji Ruler was present with his full quota of troops and was entrusted with the honourable duty of settling the amounts of tribute to be levied from the subjugated rulers in the Carnatic, a work which, because of the financial gains always

accruing from such a settlement, was only given to the most honoured and favourite representatives. Even Shahu Maharaj himself was generously disposed towards Narayan and Anubai, and in recognition of the services rendered to the Mahratta Empire by Venkatrao some years before and in appreciation no doubt of the work which the Ichalkaranji State was then carrying on, the Maharaja of Satara conferred on Anubai in 1746 a Sanad confirming the grant of the whole Mahal of Ajra which had been in the actual possession and enjoyment of the rulers of Ichalkaranji for a number of years.

In 1749-50 Shahu Maharaj lay on his death-bed at Satara and, with an eye fixed on the future of Maharashtra, appointed the Peishwa Nana Saheb to be the sole administrator of the ever-growing Mahratta Empire, knowing full well that under the able administration of this proved statesman, the dream of Shivaji Maharaja would stand the greatest chance of being fully and definitely and lastingly realised. But as soon as Ram Raja was raised to the throne in the place of Shahu Maharaja, Tarabai, his grandmother, endeavoured to oust the Peishwa from power and to seize the reins of Government in her own hands. With this object in view she had asked Dadoba Pratinidhi to raise an army and fight her cause, whilst on the other hand Sakharambhau, the senior and the only surviving Peishwa of Shahu, who was greatly opposed to the succession of Ram

Raja, had sent word to Sambhaji, his rival at Kolhapur, urging him to seize that excellent opportunity of invading and capturing Satara. Nana Saheb Peishwa quickly realised that although Ram Raja and Sambhaji were themselves deadly enemies, it was very possible that between the two of them he himself would be placed in a very difficult position, especially if, as so often happens in such cases, they both centred their attack on him first.

Faced with such a formidable position, Nana Saheb decided to move quickly and decisively, and so he at once put a stop to all the palace intrigues against the successors of Shahu, and then led an expedition against the Deccan Subha of Hyderabad. Narayan Venkatrao was present during this campaign under the banner of the Peishwa. Salabat Jung Subha was as much alarmed as he was surprised by this Mahratta invasion, especially as the expedition promised to yield most substantial advantages. But at this moment, when it appeared as though the Peishwa was about to consolidate his position in the south in a very profitable manner, the ambitious Tarabai definitely raised the standard of revolt against the Peishwa's growing supremacy, and her first move was to imprison and dethrone Ram Raja, the King of Satara, who had been definitely nominated by Shahu as his successor. Tarabai then invited Damaji Gaikwad of Baroda to co-operate with her in curbing the increasing



3. TARABAI, QUEEN OF KOLHAPUR.

[3 *Facing page* 48.

domination of the Peishwa.

When Nana Saheb heard of this unfortunate movement which was aimed not only against him personally but also against the whole Mahratta Confederacy, he at once decided to mediate peace with the Pindharis who were too strong for him; and so he sent Narayan Tatya to assist the Pindharis and others who were bearing the brunt of the initial revolt. He followed this up by making a sudden treaty with Salabat Jung and then hastening to Satara, where he defeated Damaji Rao Gaikwad of Baroda, imprisoned him, and used all available means to release Ram Raja from imprisonment. In this difficult period Narayanrao Tatya, or perhaps it will be more accurate to say his mother Anubai, loyally served the Peishwa and largely assisted in quelling the injudicious revolt of Tarabai and putting a stop to the many intrigues of the palace.

But as Tarabai reconciled was less dangerous than Tarabai revengeful, Nana Saheb agreed to release Dadoba Pratinidhi from prison and restore his Jagheer to him. But Tarabai could not, it appears, refrain from military activities, and so she asked the Pratinidhi to raise an army and to lead an expedition against the Nawab of Savanoor. Although the Peishwa was opposed to this move of Tarabai, he could not openly disregard her commands, as she was the *de facto* ruler of Satara; and so he asked Narayanrao Tatya to accompany the Pratinidhi in

this campaign, which, however, proved disastrous to the invaders when the Pratinidhi was defeated in 1752.

In the next year, when he was proceeding to the Carnatic, Peishwa Nana Saheb halted at Kolhapur and paid his respects to Sambhaji Maharaja, the King, recognising that by paying such homage both the King and the Queen Jijabai would be conciliated and honoured on this occasion. It is said that Nana Saheb promised that the Kolhapur Raj should in future be kept sacrosanct, a promise which so pleased the Maharaja that he confirmed upon the Peishwa a Jagheer of the Forts of Bhimagad, Parasgad, and Wallabagad with all the villages attached to them. Nana Saheb entrusted the Mamlat, or control, of these forts to Anubai who was present with him in the Carnatic expedition. This fact, when coupled with the sequestration order of the Peishwa to Narayanrao asking him to hand over Navalgund, Dharwar and Gadag districts to Kolhapur (as recorded in the Peishwa's Rojnishi, Volume I), seems to be proof positive that in the early days of the Ichalkaranji State its Ruler was a feudatory of the Satara Durbar and took orders either from the Satara King or his representative the Peishwa.

In 1752 Ranoji Ghorpade had granted Gavase in Inam to Narayanrao in return for some valuable service rendered by Anubai; and when in 1753 the Peishwa made two very successful expeditions in the Carnatic, he added to the territories

of Narayan Rao by making over to him the Mamlats of Dharwar and Terdal in return for the excellent part he had played as a leader in those two Carnatic wars. There is no doubt that as a military tactician Narayanrao followed very closely the characteristics of his father, and Nana Saheb used his martial capabilities and talents to the utmost. In 1754 he was ordered with Mahadji Purandare again to invade the Carnatic countries and recover from the recalcitrant rulers and chiefs the Mahratta dues. In this campaign he was obstructed by the ruling Gokak Chief, but he defeated him, reduced his Pargana, and liberated the two sons of the former ruler of Gadag. In return for their freedom, these sons gratefully granted to Narayanrao in Inam the village of Hunshal. In this Carnatic expedition Narayanrao recovered Mahratta dues amounting to 3870 lakhs, and as his efforts had proved so successful and as he had such a wide knowledge of the intrigues and policies of the Carnatic Chiefs, the Peishwa ordered him to encamp at Dharwar with 5000 men to supervise the administration of the country and to watch the movements of the Carnatic Feudatories.

He remained there for some time doing good service, but not for long could this intrepid soldier remain inactive. He next joined his mother Anubai who was engaged with the Peishwa in the expedition against the Nawab of Savanoor in 1756, but being seized with sickness on this trip Tatya Saheb

returned home. Anubai, however, with Visaji Narayan, Hari Ram and other trusted civil and military servants remained with the expedition, taking a very active part and helping Gopalrao Patwardhan, one of the brave Haribhat's sons, to defeat the Chief of Sunda and to reduce the Fort of Madangad. Following the usual custom, this latter fort was granted by the Peishwa as a further adjunct to the Ichalkaranji State. Narayan Rao also secured from him the Mamlat of almost all the Talukas in the extensive Parganah of Dharwar, in return for which he pledged himself to maintain peace and order in that province and to guarantee the regular payments of all Government dues.

We now come to what is probably the most fortunate year in the annals of Ichalkaranji State, namely 1756. At this time, in addition to Jagheers, Inams, and Deshmukhi Haks in Maharashtra, the Ruler of Ichalkaranji enjoyed the very lucrative Mamlats of Dharwar, Kancanwadi, Kalanidhi, Khanapur, Chandgad and Bagewadi; the revenue of the three forts of Wallabagad, Parasgad and Bhimagad belonging to the Peishwa; and the Kamavisi Ammal of Rayabag; but it must be admitted that the excellent progress which had been made since the death of Venkatrao was very largely due to the energies and abilities and courage of the ambitious Anubai, who always promoted the interests of her State and endeavoured to raise its prestige to the highest extent. She wielded a very great moral

influence over her nephews Nana Saheb, Bhau Saheb and Raghunathrao Dadasheb, and although Tatya Saheb her son became most stubborn with the passing years, she managed for a whole decade to overcome any evil influences which his impulsiveness and foolishness were likely to produce. Fortune had provided many opportunities by which the Ichalkaranji State could assist the Peishwa, and Anubai was never slow in making the most of those opportunities. Her activities had been crowned with such success in 1756 that it appeared as if Ichalkaranji was to become one of the greatest States in Maharashtra, but just as the wheel of fortune so frequently takes an unexpected turn in the affairs of men, even so does the history of nations show that disaster comes just at the time when the triumph of ambition is at its greatest.

In Tatya Saheb the Ichalkaranji State did not have a Ruler of whom it could be proud. Although the son of a very able father, the new ruler had neither initiative nor ambition, whilst his mother Aunbai adopted such a domineering attitude that Tatya Saheb did not take even the smallest part in the affairs of the State. This attitude on the part of Anubai was, however, probably the result more of love for her heritage than of antagonism to her son. Doubtless she realised his impotency of mind and his incompetency of ambition, and rather than permit him, by his indolence or inefficiency, to ruin the State which

had been built up with so much courage, wisdom, and statesmanship, she decided that it would be better to control the destinies of Ichalkaranji herself. Anubai was also probably very well aware of the intrigues that went on in those days when the Ruler was weak and vacillating, and therefore she adopted the only possible means to prevent the dissolution of the State.

Tatya Saheb, however, was not so incompetent as to fail to recognise the attitude of his mother, and more than once he vigorously objected to actions on the part of Anubai which were represented to him as definite insults. In endeavouring to break the power of his mother, he several times plotted against her, but on each occasion her counsellors or her spies discovered the plots and foiled the enraged Tatya Saheb every time. Under such circumstances it is not surprising that he finally lost all interest in the welfare of the State.

That such an unfortunate state of affairs, with son plotting against mother and with the legitimate ruler voluntarily abdicating his powers, could not and should not be permitted to exist, several of the Ichalkaranji leaders quickly realised; and thanks to their efforts the quarrel was patched up in 1759 and the son became more or less reconciled with Anubai. Tatya Saheb was encouraged to bear his share of the responsibilities of the administration, and that the persuasions of the counsellors

were successful is shown by the fact that he was present at the Battle of Udgir in 1760. Shortly afterwards he was also sent with the seal of a Mutalik to the Carnatic where Gopalrao Patwardhan and Rasta were conducting an expedition. But, as events turned out, this was only a passing phase of authority, for when fighting ceased Tatya Saheb drifted back to his old ways of creating disorder and fomenting intrigues to bring about the downfall of those who were striving to do the work which he should have been doing.

The Kolhapur Durbar, always alert to aggrandise itself at the expense of any neighbouring State or family which was in difficulties, naturally took advantage of the differences between Anubai and Tatya Saheb to plunder some of the Ichalkaranji villages, even going to the extent of burning some when the inhabitants manifested resistance. Anubai, however, was not slow to take up her quest for vengeance, and despite the fact that Kolhapur was more powerful, she set her forces against the army of the Mahrattas, inflicting upon them a severe defeat which promised the safety of her territory for some considerable time.

Then in 1761 the Kolhapur Prince Sambhaji died, and in his place there came to the throne Jijabai. Realising that Jijabai was doing her best to thwart the intentions and to ruin the power of the Peishwa Nana Saheb, who at that time was,

it must be admitted, seeking to annex the Kolhapur State, the Peishwa asked Anubai to watch the movements of the Kolhapur Darbar. Thus we have a picture almost unprecedented in any history, namely, that of two warrior queens ruling two important States and each watching the movements of the other and endeavouring to thwart her plans. It would be difficult to imagine a more romantic story than could be told of the political policies adopted by the two Mahratta heroines, but it must be left to the historical novelist to do full justice to such a romantic episode..

Immediately following the death of Sambhaji of Kolhapur without issue and the occupancy of the Gadi by Jijabai, the Peishwa sent his troops to attach the State as there was no legitimate heir. Naturally Jijabai registered a most vehement protest and bitterly accused the Peishwa Nana Saheb of breach of faith and betrayal of trust. Historians of various schools differ, however, in their versions of this incident, for while some of them accuse Nana Saheb of a most unchivalrous action against a heroic queen, and others seek to show that the Peishwa deliberately broke a solemn promise, the fact remains that in acting as he did Nana Saheb was probably only following the example of Shivaji the Great by subordinating all his personal feelings to the one objective of consolidating the Mahratta Empire, and as Nana Saheb had already received

ample evidence that Jijabai of Kolhapur was none too friendly a neighbour, it would seem that he was justified in endeavouring to safeguard the Poona Government by absorbing the Kolhapur territory into an Empire ruled by the Peishwa.

Just what would have been the outcome of this triangular contest between Nana Saheb and the rival Queens is difficult to state. But at that time events in another part of India settled the question for both Jijabai and Nana Saheb. The crushing defeat of the Mahrattas at Panipat in that year practically broke the heart of the Peishwa who did not live long to bear his disappointment and his shame. Of this broken-hearted man, one of the latest of the English historians has the following to say:—

"Scant justice has been dealt to this eminent prince who did the English the best turn ever done them by a foreigner. Without the real greatness of Baji Rao, Balaji was a wise and farsighted politician. He met with rare skill and firmness the crisis caused by Tarabai's intrigues and Damaji's rebellion; he reduced to a shadow the power of the Nizam; and but for Panipat would have added the whole of Southern India to the Mahratta Kingdom."—*Kincaid's "History of the Mahrattas," Vol. III, p. 76.*

The result of Panipat naturally had a very great effect on the ambitions and policies of the Poona Government, and Nana

Saheb's son Madhavrao I, who succeeded him, quickly showed signs of that statesmanship and wisdom which later on made him the greatest of all the Peishwas. Despite the avowed policy of his father to absorb Kolhapur, the young Peishwa decided to permit Jijabai to adopt a son, a generous act which undoubtedly saved the life of the Kolhapur principality, but an act, nevertheless, which in course of time proved far less successful in point of political advisability than was anticipated. But generosity is not always repaid in the way intended by the one who practises it, and Madhavrao I not only lived to regret his policy of conciliation as far as Jijabai was concerned but later found the continued existence of this independent State of Kolhapur to be a perpetual political thorn in the side of the Mahratta Confederacy.

Jijabai having been more or less reinstated as a ruler, she quickly manifested her belligerent spirit by seeking revenge for the defeat inflicted on her troops by her rival Anubai. As might have been expected, Jijabai could not forgive the restrictions that Anubai's watchfulness had placed upon her own activities, and so she took the first opportunity of showing Anubai that she still resented the part that Ichalkaranji had played. Jijabai's opportunity for revenge came in 1764, when the fighting force of Ichalkaranji, under the leadership of Narayan Rao, had been drawn away to the Carnatic; and so

the Kolhapur troops swooped down into the Ichalkaranji territory time after time, harassing, plundering and burning a number of villages in the Ajra District. Under ordinary circumstances these acts of aggression and impudence would have been severely dealt with by Narayan Rao when he returned from his Carnatic expedition, but unfortunately for Ichalkaranji this young man seemed to take no interest whatever in the affairs of his own family heritage, for he once again plunged into a career of recklessness. Although such an attitude on the part of her son assured for Anubai the continuance of her position as the Ruler of Ichalkaranji State, she nevertheless did her best to persuade Narayan Rao to mend his ways and to take his rightful place in the administration.

Similarly some interesting unpublished letters of Venubai to her mother Anubai show that various members of the Peishwa family joined Anubai in her efforts to bring Narayan Rao to his senses; but all to no avail. The nominal Chief of Ichalkaranji month after month developed into a political nonentity, until Narayan Rao did not even have the heart or interest to defend the territories of his State against the inroads of the great Hyder Ali who at this time was gradually reducing to subjection the Mahratta country in the Carnatic. As a result of this activity on the part of Hyder, Ichalkaranji lost its Mamlats in Dharwar, a seizure which considerably reduced the

revenue of the State inasmuch as the Carnatic Mamlats were among the most lucrative of all the Ichalkaranji possessions.

Probably realising from these attacks on the neighbouring States that Hyder Ali was becoming a real menace to the existence of the Mahratta confederacy, Madhavrao Peishwa decided to curb the power of this great southern Ruler. He personally conducted four expeditions against Hyder Ali, and with that vigour, celerity and strategy which earned for him so great a name throughout the whole of his career, Madhavrao courageously took the war into the enemy's country; that is to say, into the territories which had been taken from the Mahratta Swaraj by Hyder Ali. Incidentally in so doing the Peishwa came to the help of Ichalkaranji, for when he captured the fort of Dharwar on November 5, 1764, he was able to restore the Dharwar Mamlats to Anubai. Madhavrao then penetrated farther south, and repeatedly defeated the forces of Hyder Ali, finally compelling him to come to terms by which all the captured Mahratta Pergunnas were restored and a heavy fine paid by the discomfited Hyder.

Whilst, of course, the main objective of Madhavrao's expeditions was to defeat the menacing Moslem King of the South, the Peishwa's action in making good all the losses which had been sustained by Ichalkaranji showed the esteem in which the State was held by the Poona Government, especially as in

actuality the indolence and indifference of Narayan Rao would perhaps have justified the Peishwa in retaining the territories which he had recovered from Hyder Ali.

Not content with neglecting his rightful duties and with refusing to shoulder his responsibilities, Narayan Rao went still further and deliberately plotted against the Ichalkaranji State by endeavouring to seduce the Shilledar and Shibandi soldiers from allegiance to Anubai. It is probable, of course, that these intrigues against his mother were primarily due to an inherent desire to be master in his own house, and had Narayan Rao shown any honest inclinations or tendencies to administer his State properly, he would doubtless have received a good deal of sympathy and support. But his manners and methods and his utter recklessness cut him off from any assistance which he might have received from some of the Ichalkaranji counsellors, for no statesman would listen to his wayward schemes. Anubai's influence, which was largely the outcome of her wide experience and successful regime, always prevailed in the Ichalkaranji Councils, and so the various efforts of Narayanrao to foment trouble were all fruitless. Yet although Narayan had shown himself so unworthy and so incapable of ruling, Anubai did not wish to assert her own power more than was necessary, and she finally persuaded Madhavrao Peishwa in 1766 to recognise Venkatrao, the son of Narayan Rao Tatya, as

a Sardar. The Peishwa also empowered either Venkatrao or Anubai to raise a new Ichalkaranji Corps; granted as a personal Jagheer to Venkatrao the villages of Kadlas, Papari, and Bedag; issued orders to the village officers of Parvati, Hadapsar and Padali to continue to acknowledge the ownership of Ichalkaranji over the garden lands in those villages; and in the next year sent a Yadi to Jijabai, the Regent Queen of Kolhapur, asking her not only to restore the Deshmukhi Haks that she had attached from the Ichalkaranji Chief but also to desist from making any more plundering raids against the Ichalkaranji villages on the borders of the Kolhapur territory. The above series of personal attentions showed by Madhavrao to Anubai once more reveal the respect in which the Ichalkaranji Queen was held by Madhavrao Peishwa.

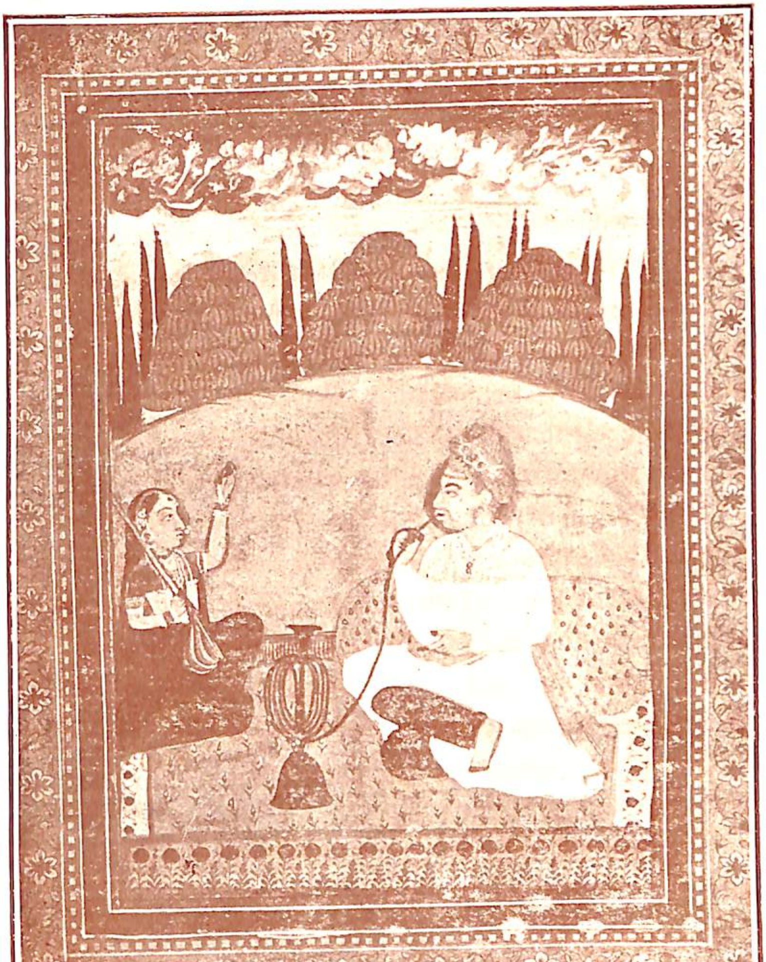
It did not take long for Anubai and Venkatrao to use the powers given to them to raise a new army of Ichalkaranji troops, for in 1763 we find Venkatrao II, although only about 13 years old, being present in person with the army that Madhavarao Peishwa led against Raghoba Dada, later known as the evil genius of the Peishwa and the Mahratta Confederacy. One cannot help thinking of the amazing contrast which this incident produced. Here was the young Venkatrao just entering his teens taking an active part on the battlefield at Dhodap whilst his father was wasting away his life and opportunities

at home. All the previous heads of the Ichalkaranji family had been born warriors as well as statesmen, and it must have thrilled Anubai to see her grandson wear that mantle of martial bravery which should have fallen on the shoulders of her son but which was spurned by him. From this time Narayan Rao led the most vicious of lives, his motto apparently being, Eat, drink, and be merry. Like all such rakes, however, he did not live long to enjoy his whirlwind career of pleasure, for after suffering long agonies from an incurable disease, he died in November, 1770, with not even his mother Anubai present to comfort him in his last hours, she being absent in Poona at the time.

Few men had been given greater opportunities to distinguish themselves and to promote the prestige of their family inheritance than Narayan Rao, that unfortunate prince who comes down to history as an inglorious failure. There is no doubt that his own natural abilities were well above the ordinary; that in his mother he had an administrator who was both wise and widely respected; that in his State he had an administration which was producing an excellent income and an inheritance which was unencumbered; and that the friendliness of the Peishwas and the Patwardhans ensured for him the fullest support of the strongest character should an occasion demand it. But all of these special oppor-

tunities were of no avail in helping Narayan Rao to accept his responsibilities. In justice to the unfortunate prince, however, it should perhaps be suggested that doubtless the listlessness of his father Venkatrao in the last few years of the latter's life, coupled with the ever-ambitious and somewhat domineering nature of his mother Anubai, proved too mixed a heritage for him, and could the psychologists of this modern age undertake an investigation of the factors which entered into the experience and actions of Narayan Rao, it may well be that their verdict would suggest that it was not entirely Narayan Rao's fault that he gave way to vices which ultimately killed him. Yet it must be admitted that the same psychologists would point out that it would have been possible for Narayan Rao to overcome any evil results of a mixed inheritance and to make of himself as brilliant a ruler as were his immediate predecessors. But instead of being able to record such a triumphant personal victory over inherited tendencies, history has to record a most tragic exit following an uncommonly triumphant entry onto the stage of Mahratta politics.

The bright side of this picture, of course, is that the defections of Narayan Rao brought into prominence one of the most remarkable of all Mahratta leaders. It may have been that Anubai would have eclipsed a much brighter historic sun than Narayan Rao, but the fact remains that it was Anubai who



4. Bajirao I Enjoying Music.

[4 *Facing page* 64.

shed the required light when the real luminaries of the State failed. Few rulers of Ichalkaranji, or of any other Mahratta State for that matter, turned their ambitions to such good advantage and used their energies and talents so loyally. Maharashtra, it is true, has seen several of these Regal Amazons, but none who became so universally respected and so generally revered as Anubai. Her ambition for the increased prestige of her State never led her into unprovoked wars of aggrandisement; her martial ability never led her into disloyal expeditions. She lived for Ichalkaranji; she ruled Ichalkaranji in a perilous period; and she saved Ichalkaranji from sure extinction at a time when it was at the height of its importance.

But the story of Anubai is not yet finished; and the next chapter will deal with her still greater exploits, and her one great political mistake.

CHAPTER IV.

Venkatrao Narayan II.

At the time when Narayan Rao was lingering on his death-bed, his mother Anubai was busily engaged at Poona with the Peishwa in settling an important State problem of Ichalkaranji. The elaborate military operations which had been necessitated by the aggrandising expeditions of Hyder Ali in the Dharwar Pergunna from 1764 to 1770, and the measures which the State had been forced to adopt to stop plundering raids nearer home by the Kolhapur Darbar, had practically exhausted the financial resources of Anubai's State. Athough the Mamlats of Dharwar, which at one time had been the most lucrative of all her possessions, had been restored to Anubai by the Peishwa after the defeat of Hyder Ali, they failed henceforward to yield the expected revenue; and so in addition to the exceptional expenditure which had been incurred for her offensive and defensive operations, Anubai found herself faced not only with a treasury depleted almost to bankruptcy but also with an income which was considerably less than she had anticipated. So when the Poona Government began to press her hard for the prompt payment of the revenue dues of Ichalkaranji, Anubai decided to go to Madhavrao and candidly and frankly explain her position. Once again her influence

prevailed on the generous-minded Madhavrao, who again not only manifested his respect for this brave and dauntless Queen but accepted her explanation and settled the claim of the Poona Government by fixing the moderate sum of three quarters of a lakh of rupees to be paid in four monthly instalments. But on this occasion, probably at Anubai's request, he also examined carefully, and revised to her satisfaction, the political and financial relations between Ichalkaranji as a Feudatory State and the Central Poona Government. He also restored the villages of Lat and Rangoli which had been granted in 1735 to Venkatrao Naran Rao I by Ranoji Ghorpade, grandson of Santojirao, the Peishwa incidentally showing by this restoration his complete confidence in and gratefulness to Anubai and her administration.

Having settled all these very important affairs of the State, Anubai accompanied the Peishwa in his next expedition against Hyder Ali, but she and Venkatrao had only got as far as Jeur when she heard the sad news of Narayan Rao's death. With the Peishwa's permission she at once returned to her capital. Although the news came as a great shock, Anubai bore the blow courageously, realising that it was now more than ever her duty to place the fortunes of Ichalkaranji in front of her own personal feelings. Her first move was to ask the Peishwa to recognise Venkatrao her grandson as the Chief

of Ichalkaranji, a request which Madhavrao readily granted. But as the grandson was still only a youth and was regarded as a minor, the Poona Government officially appointed Anubai as Regent; and so this brave Queen, although more than 60 years old and still grieving for the loss and the shame of her only son, was called upon once again to apply her talents and her energies to carrying on the administration of the Ichalkaranji State. It will be recalled that young Venkatrao had been created a Sardar by the Peishwa in 1766 during the lifetime of Narayan Rao, and it is interesting to note that even after Venkatrao succeeded to the Gadi he continued to hold his military rank under the Peishwa as one of his principal Sardars.

Early in 1772 the great Jijabai of Kolhapur died. She, like Anubai, had administered her State since her husband's death in the name of her (adopted) son. But, unlike Anubai, the Kolhapur Queen-Mother had left her State surrounded by enemies, and for ten years, Kolhapur, attacked from all quarters, was on the brink of ruin. Yet it must be admitted that the sole credit of maintaining the Kolhapur Kingdom intact for a decade must be given to Jijabai. Her courage, energy, powers of discretion, perseverance and ability to achieve her goal by using all available means are almost without parallel in Mahratta history. Unlike Tarabai, she was never carried away by sentiment; she never imposed upon herself a really impossible task,

even though on some occasions her plans looked impossible to those who did not realise her possibilities and her powers. She was autocratic and never tolerated disobedience, and it was probably this characteristic which was largely responsible for her complete control over the various factions in her State. But as far as this history is concerned, the one great peculiarity of her rule was her bitter hatred of the Ichalkaranji State and its Rulers. She spared no pains either to obtain revenge for past defeats by the Ichalkaranji forces or to reduce their power and prestige by attacking them unawares. Like all great people, Jijabai had her faults; but viewed from this distance of time, it must be admitted that her shortcomings did not overshadow her greatness as a Ruler.

The same year, 1772, also saw the passing of another great Mahratta character, for in November of that year Madhavrao I, the greatest of all the Peishwas, died at the very early age of 28. He had been ailing for some considerable time and in 1770 had been compelled by the ravages of that fell disease consumption to hand over his personal charge of the Carnatic campaign to Trimbak Rao. His health then improved in Poona for a time, but just as he was preparing to go on another campaign he fell a victim to that disease which has taken such a heavy toll of the flower of Maharashtrian chivalry. His death was a great loss to the Mahratta nation,

for the disappearance of such a brave, just and judicious ruler sounded the first unwelcome knell of the ultimate dissolution of the great Mahratta Confederacy. It seemed that he alone had realised the possibility of fulfilling the ideal of the great Shivaji Maharaja. For while Madhavrao Scindia and Nana Furnavees were at that time just looming on the political horizon of the Mahratta Kingdom, neither of these seemed to possess the combined abilities which so characterized Madhavrao Peishwa. It is true that both Madhavrao Scindia and Nana Furnavees had the same unflinching courage, constructive ambition and timely boldness as Madhavrao I, but the Gwalior warrior lacked the statesmanlike sanity and sense of proportion of the Poona Peishwa, whilst Nana Furnavees did not possess his inherent military ability. Madhavrao I must forever be regarded as one of the most remarkable rulers in Indian history. Whilst still practically only a child, he was called upon to shoulder the vast responsibility of administering the Mahratta Empire, and he quickly showed that he could triumph over all obstacles and prove victorious over all foes whether internal or external. Within a very few years he silenced his enemies and placed the Poona Government on a very stable footing as far as politics were concerned, and he was thus able to turn his attention from early manhood to the improvement of the condition of the people. All departments of the administration were thoroughly

overhauled and personally encouraged, whilst his secret intelligence system stretched to the farthermost corner of his own territories and into those neighbouring States which might at any time threaten him with invasion. He was gifted with great capacity for organization, and it was under his control that the Mahratta army became so well equipped and so well trained. "The only fault," says one historian, "that the harshest critic can find in this admirable Ruler is that he shortened his life, so precious to his people, by his arduous and unceasing toil."

It was such a man as this who saw in Anubai a brave Queen and worthy Ruler who was always ready to sacrifice her own personal convenience and interests to those of the State she was ruling in place of that beloved son who had so unfortunately refused to accept his responsibility.

From the time of the death of Madhavarao I, things seemed to take a bad turn for the Mahratta Empire. Madhavrao's successor was his brother Narayanrao, a youth of 17 who not only lacked the outstanding qualities of his predecessors but who was also heedless and somewhat mischievous. It is said that Madhavrao once declared somewhat prophetically that he knew his brother Narayanrao was not born to rule; and so it proved to be, for nine months after his brother's death, Narayanrao was himself assassinated. Had Madhavrao's careful training of his brother resulted as the Peishwa had intended,

it is possible that a very different ending would have been written to Mahratta history, but the weak and vacillating youth played right into the hands of those intriguers who sought to take advantage of the change in rulership. It is generally believed that Narayanrao's uncle, Raghunathrao Dada, better known as Raghoba, was directly implicated in that horrible crime of assassination which so bestirred the whole Maharashtrian nation, although it is also true that the real cause of Narayanrao's death was the contending passion of two jealous women, namely Anandibai, Raghunathrao's wife, and Gopikabai, Narayanrao's mother.

Following the assassination, there was for a time a general cry that all offenders should be punished, and on the succeeding day the banner of this righteous indignation was raised in the form so well known as the Barbhai Cabinet, headed by the veteran statesman Sakharam Bapu Bokil and the loyal Nana Furnavees. This Cabal ministry induced the Satara Raja, who was still nominal head of the Mahratta Confederacy, to dismiss Raghoba and to nominate to the Peishwaship the unborn child of Narayanrao, whose widow Gangabai had only with difficulty been dissuaded from committing Sati on her husband's death. The Satara King, following the advice of Sakharam Bapu and Nana, declared Raghoba to be a rebel. Intent upon proving his superiority of strength, Raghoba collected an army

and started a civil war. First honours fell to Raghoba, for early in the conflict the Barbhai troops lost Trimbak Mama, their trusted commander and son-in-law of Anubai, at Kasegaon near Pandharpur, the whole battle lasting less than twenty minutes. Both Trimbak Mama and his wife Venubai had carefully watched the interests of Anubai, and so his death at such a time proved a very severe loss for Ichalkaranji. Raghoba, flushed with early victory, then marched towards Poona, and had he mustered up sufficient courage to invade the Peishwa's capital there is no doubt that he would have gained a permanent supremacy; but hearing of intrigues against him, he hesitated for a sufficient time to enable the Peishwa's army to be reinforced. Realising then that the tide of fortune had turned against him, Raghoba retreated from the battlefield in the Deccan, and when his last hopes were shattered by the birth of a son to Gangabai, he finally took refuge in the territories of the East India Company in Bombay.

These serious civil disturbances in Maharashtra naturally had effects on the neighbouring States. Recognising that Ichalkaranji could not, for the time being, expect any material support from the Poona Government, the Kolhapur Darbar set out to invade the Ichalkaranji State. But once again Kolhapur met its match, for the somewhat rabble army of Panhala was thrice defeated by the faithful officers of Anubai. Rather than

continue a useless war indefinitely, the Ichalkaranji Queen proposed terms of peace which, however, were scorned by the haughty Kolhapur Darbar to its ultimate dismay and disaster. When once again the din of battle was heard in that arena, Anubai's army gained yet another splendid victory at Tandulwadi in 1775 against the Kolhapur forces, which were most severely handled by Konhar Rao Patwardhan. In passing, an interesting incident might be related to illustrate the character of this brave warrior. Konhar Rao was badly wounded in this battle and when the Lady Laxmibai, the mother of Venkatrao Dada, the young Ichalkaranji Chief, went to see him and gratefully expressed her appreciation of those sacrifices so voluntarily made for the welfare of the Ichalkaranji State, Konhar Rao, with consummate chivalry, replied that the Patwardhans one and all owed a very deep debt of gratitude to the Ghorpade family of Ichalkaranji because it was through Ichalkaranji that the Patwardhans had obtained a footing in the Peishwa Government and had risen to considerable power and position. Hence, said Konhar Rao, he gloried in his wounds and would even give his life, were it necessary, in the service of Ichalkaranji.

After such a series of defeats, the Kolhapur Darbar was compelled at length to sue for that peace which had often been offered to it by the Ichalkaranji Ruler. A treaty was signed at Purandhar in 1775 between the Peishwa and Kolha-

pur, one of the articles of which specifically bound Kolhapur to restore to Ichalkaranji its Inam villages, including Lat and Rangoli, and its Deshmukhi and Sirdeshmukhi rights and lands that had been in the enjoyment of Ichalkaranji previously. But in those days of Kolhapur's belligerence, the conditions of a treaty were only maintained as long as no opportunity presented itself to violate them with benefit to Kolhapur, and so at the earliest possible moment the Kolhapur Darbar was seen breaking its word and again launching its excursions into the neighbouring territory of Ichalkaranji.

It may be that, after the Treaty of Purandhar, Venkatrao believed that his territory would be safe from the inroads of the Panhala army; or, on the other hand, knowing Kolhapur as he did, it is quite possible that he maintained a policy of preparedness even in spite of the Treaty. But any doubts he might have had regarding the intentions of Kolhapur were soon settled by the renewed raids of the Panhala troops into the Ichalkaranji territory, and so once more Venkatrao was called upon to teach Kolhapur a lesson. Probably realising that a victorious Kolhapur would have meant danger to the Poona Government, the Peishwa sent a strong army to the help of Venkatrao, and the combined forces defeated and routed the Kolhapur army in a pitched battle at Vadgaon. The victorious army then marched to Kolhapur, besieged it for a while, and

before it capitulated plundered a portion of the city. A number of engagements were fought outside the city walls during the siege, in one of which Venkatrao was wounded. Seeing that his cause was hopeless, the Kolhapur general asked that the siege be raised, and when the Kolhapur Darbar promised to pay a lakh of rupees towards the expenses of the war, the attacking forces accepted the offer. Thus Ichalkaranji was once more given a short respite from the expeditions and invasions of Kolhapur.

In 1776, the year following the battle of Vadgaon, Anubai committed what was probably the only serious political blunder in her long and active life. For some reason which it is difficult to fathom, she espoused the cause of a Kanoja Brahmin who pretended, while Madhavrao was alive, to be the celebrated Bhau Saheb, the hero of Panipat. This man's name was Sukhnidhan, or the "Treasurer of happiness." Madhavrao Ballal the Peishwa had quickly seen through the impostor's deception and had confined him in Miraj Fort until 1775 when, owing to a special appeal made by Gopalrao Patwardhan, the impostor was sent to Ratnagiri for confinement in the Fort. Of this remarkable man Mr. Kincaid says: "There must have been something uncommon in the pretender Sukhnidhan, for he now won adherents from among the chief officers of the State. The first to acknowledge him was the very subhedar to whose care

he had been entrusted, and he was soon in possession of the entire district of Ratnagiri. Soon his followers included Venkatrao Ghorpade, the Chief of Ichalkaranji, Raghunath Kolhatkar, the real Sadashivrao's brother-in-law, and Naro Shanker, the maternal uncle of the Peishwa's mother Gangabai. Encouraged by his early successes, the pretender acted with the greatest energy. He seized the fleet and with its aid carried all the great forts along the coast. He was soon master of the entire Konkan and at the head of 20,000 men he carried the Bhor Pass and the Fort of Rajmachi." But at last his good fortune failed him and he was captured at Kolaba by Raghunath Angria and handed over to the Poona Government on the condition that he would not be punished without a full enquiry. A commission of 27 people, presided over by Ram Shastri, carefully examined his pretensions, and ultimately pronounced him to be an impostor, whereupon he finally suffered an impostor's death.

Although there are no definite records available, it is interesting to note that there is a well-established tradition in Ichalkaranji that when in full flight with the Pretender, ending up with their capture by Angria, Venkatrao Narayanrao II sought and obtained the protection of the British in Bombay for a short time; and it may even be that the decisive condition of Raghoji Angria that the Pretender should be given a fair trial

was partly the result of the pleadings (or influence) of the Chief of Ichalkaranji. At any rate, it seems certain that Angria permitted Venkatrao to escape.

Naturally the Government also dealt very severely with the Pretender's followers, in spite of the fact that many people honestly had believed him to be the real Bhau and had rallied round his standard on that account only. Anubai, who previously had found her experience and her foresight sufficient always to lead her to the right decision, this time made a very serious blunder when she counselled Venkatrao her grandson to support Sukhnidhan and promise him active help. On the conviction of the Pretender, the Ichalkaranji Ruler was also given a severe punishment, even though he was a nobleman of the first class and a relative of the Peishwa Government. But the Peishwa had been badly affected by Venkatrao's espousal of the Pretender's cause at the very time when the Government at Poona were fighting for their very life against the English, Hyder Ali, Kolhapur and other rulers. It seems probable that Venkatrao would have been sentenced to the same fate that was meted out to the Pretender had not Parsharam Bhau Patwardhan, the trusted general of the Peishwa Government, interceded. So Venkatrao escaped with his life, but was fined heavily. The Poona Government attached his entire property and only returned it on payment of a fine of Rs. 1,25,000. He

also was made to perform the prescribed penance rituals.

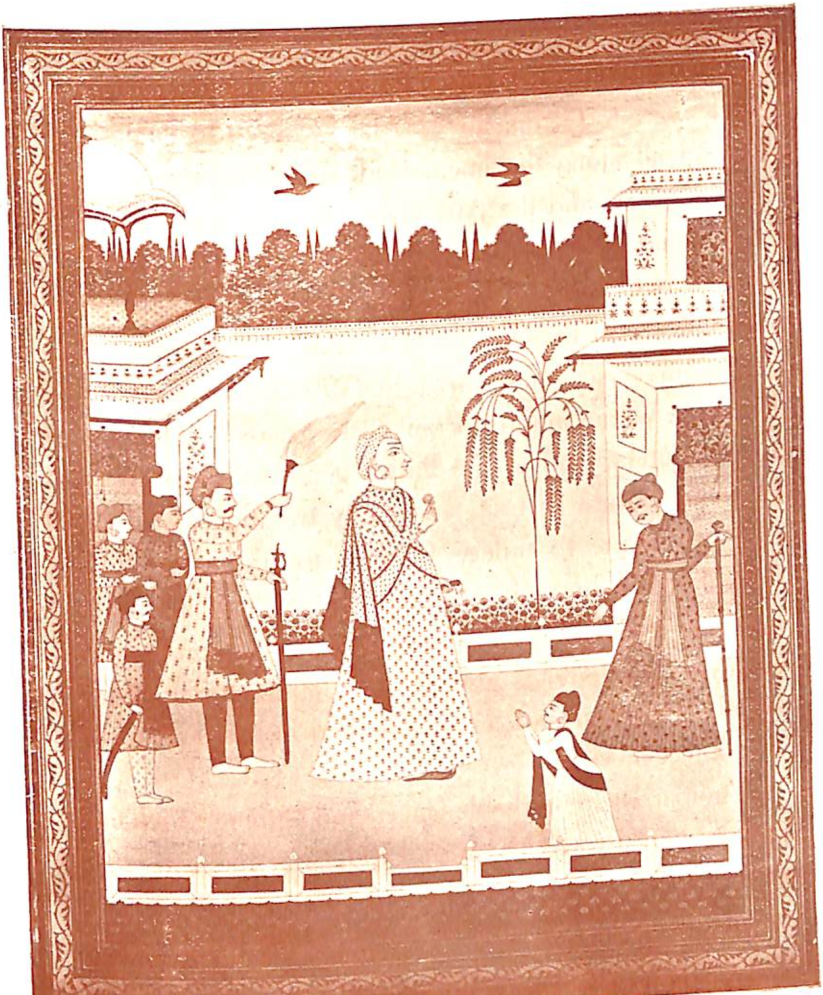
As was to be expected, the Kolhapur Darbar was not slow to take advantage of the distracted state of the Poona Government and the strained relations between the Peishwa and the Ichalkaranji Ruler; and so in 1778 Kolhapur sought to seize the talukas of Chikodi and Manoli and certain Ichalkaranji villages which it claimed or planned to make its own. But the Kolhapur Darbar failed to recognise the unlimited capacity and strength of the Peishwa with the famous Mahadji Scindia, whose troops were also reinforced by the army of Venkatrao Dada. Kolhapur City was once again besieged, and in a decisive action fought near the capital the much-vaunted Kolhapur army was again utterly defeated, broken and scattered. The Darbar once more sued for peace, which was granted on the condition that Kolhapur solemnly pledged itself never again to disturb the Ichalkaranji State which was now definitely and openly recognised to be a feudatory of the Satara Government.

Although Venkatrao Dada had made the one serious blunder of supporting an impostor against the Peishwa, his general career was devoted to the assistance of the Peishwa, and he largely retrieved his mistake of 1776 when he took no small part in arresting the progress of General Goddard, the brave English commander sent in 1780-81 by the Calcutta Government to reinstate Raghunathrao on the Peishwa Gadi. The Mahratta

forces, led by Tukoji Holkar, Parsharam Bhau and Hari Pant Phadke, were too strong for Goddard who up to then had been successful all along the line. Goddard therefore had to beat a hasty retreat, and the part played by the Ichalkaranji Chief in this campaign was very favourably reported upon by the Mahratta General, with the result that he definitely regained the confidence of the ministry at Poona.

In this year lands measuring 50 bighas from his own Deshmukhi Watan in Miraj Prant were granted in Inam to Ganpati, the tutelar god of the Patwardhans at Tasgaon, a town now in the Satara District. A family tradition states that this grant was made to induce Ganpati to propitiate a Bramha Samandh (the ghost of a learned Brahmin) which for a long time had, it was believed, been troubling Ramabai, wife of Venkatrao. A letter is also in the Ichalkaranji records which says that Ramabai had served the God at Ramteerth with the same object in view.

Anubai, the remarkable Queen and heroine of Ichalkaranji, breathed her last at Tulapur in 1783. She had ceased to take any active part in the State adminstration since 1777 following her unwise advice to support the impostor Sukhnidhan. So she spent her last years making pilgrimages,—a somewhat quiet termination to an active and forceful career. As a daughter of the great founder of the Peishwa dynasty, she had commanded



5. Madhavrao Peishwa.

[5 *Facing page* 80.

universal respect, from the ruling Peishwa right down to the commonest soldier. The part she had played during her regency in the minority of her son Narayanrao; the way she had furthered the interests of the Ichalkaranji State for over 30 years from 1745 to 1776; the good relations she always maintained between herself and the Patwardhan Jagheerdars; the tact she always displayed in administrating the affairs of her State; her well- bounded ambition and her clear head; all these are factors that contributed to the successes of one of the most remarkable administrators in the history of Maharashtra, and factors which will always be remembered by the rulers and subjects of the Ichalkaranji State. Her rigid control over Narayan Rao, which was so strict as literally to force him into mischievous wildness, and her espousal of the cause of the Pretender might perhaps be regarded as shortcomings about which carping critics could say much. But these faults do not and cannot lessen the value of the brilliant services she rendered to the Ichalkaranji State. She was the last of the triad that established and raised to the highest point the status of Ichalkaranji. Few queens in any part of the world can equal her in point of successful administration in a troublous time in the midst of enemies, and Anubai must forever go down into history as one of Maharashtra's most famous women.

At the time of Anubai's death, Venkatrao was a fairly

well experienced young man and by nature brave, active and intelligent. He had received his military training largely on the battlefield and under a generalship of the highest order. He was also present with his troops at Yadagiri in 1784 when the Nizam of Hyderabad and Nana Furnavees met together to discuss and formulate measures intended to put a stop to the aggrandisement of Tippoo Sultan, "the Tiger of Mysore," the minor objective, of course, being to recapture all the Carnatic Pergunna that had been seized by Tippoo, the son of the Great Hyder Ali.

At that time Venkatrao was a promising young nobleman who was believed to be fully competent to rule his own territory, to be a loyal feudatory helping to promote the cause of the Mahratta Confederacy, and sufficiently wise and discreet to be able to maintain the highest standing of his family amongst the aristocracy of Maharashtra. But unfortunately, like his father before him, he disappointed all those who put their trust and their expectations in him. His presence with the Mahratta army at Yadagiri in 1784 and in the subsequent campaign undertaken against Tippoo, which ended in the capture of Badami in 1786, proved to be his last military adventure. The young nobleman of high promise thereafter commenced to indulge freely in the vices which were probably both inherited from his father and willingly copied from him. With the

influence and control of his strict grandmother Anubai gone, and with his faithful wife Bai Ramabai unable to exert any advisory powers over him, Venkatrao had no one to check him. None of the oldtime counsellors of Ichalkaranji dared to remonstrate with him or to warn him of the sure fate that would befall him from his waywardness and neglect of state duties. No matter how great the danger or how bright the prospects of success, Venkatrao would join no military campaign, although his military advisers did succeed in maintaining an army to ward off the Kolhapur raids. Despite the most urgent calls, Venkatrao would not go to Poona. With the fine of Rs. 1,25,000 due by Ichalkaranji to the Poona Government still unpaid, with the cost of his own defensive army against Kolhapur proving a very heavy drain, and with his own extravagant and costly vices to be met, the State treasury ran low. In a short time the financial position of the State was completely disorganized, and with the death of his mother Laxmibai in 1788 the last possible check on his wild career was removed, so that Venkatrao gave full scope to his whims and vices. Money vanished, debts grew; his life became an open scandal; and when Ramabai uttered a mild word of expostulation for his own good, she was sent away in disgrace. The officers of the State, as well as the subjects, became disgusted at the manner in which he was throwing away an inheritance

with such a proud record, but no advice or warnings from within the State proved of any avail.

The time came, however, when the Poona Government could no longer connive at the dissolute career of Venkatrao. He was ordered to Poona, and although he demurred for a long time, he at last saw that he had to yield. On arrival at Poona, he had an interview with Nana Furnavees to whom he spoke in the most haughty manner. Realising the mentality and temperament of the wayward Chief, Nana Furnavees did not at first exercise his full powers, but rather cajoled and entreated before he had recourse to warnings and threatenings. But all to no purpose; and even when the persuasive tongue of Haripant Tatya Phadke was brought into the discussions, Venkatrao turned a deaf ear to all advice, no matter by whom it was given. It was obvious, therefore, that apparently the only solution of the problem was for the Ichalkaranji State to be attached; but just as once before the seemingly inevitable was averted, even in this case a scheme was devised by which the hard work and bravery of Venkatrao's ancestors would not be finally lost to the family through his indifference and waywardness. So in the crisis Ramabai was advised to place the following proposals through Raghunathrao Patwardhan of Kurundwad before the Peishwa's Government for their consideration:—

(1) That the administration of Ichalkaranji State should be allowed to be carried on by a trustworthy person as minister to be nominated by Ramabai but to work under the direct supervision of the Poona Government;

(2) That the Poona Government should allow all debts incurred by Venkatrao to be paid by the State in regular instalments;

(3) That the Supreme Government should allow the administration to keep Venkatrao under strict restraint for one year; and

(4) That the Poona Government should not attach the Ichalkaranji State if the three preceding proposals were accepted.

A great deal of discussion ensued upon this proposition, for although the Peishwa Government fully realised the very great and valuable services which the Ichalkaranji State had rendered in the years that had passed, they also felt that the time had come when, after two successive rulers had shown their incompetence to rule, a definite change in the administration should be made. But finally the proposals of Ramabai were accepted by the Poona Government, and Mahadaji Vithal Phadnis, the trusted officer of Ichalkaranji, was nominated by Ramabai as Administrator or Minister. The nomination was approved by

Government with a proviso that Mahadaji Pant should work under the direct guidance of Raghunathrao Dada Patwardhan, the Ruling Chief of Kurundwad, through whom Ramabai's proposals had been made and who had been the sole supporter of her claim. The new administration was also ordered to set aside a fixed sum to pay all outstanding debts; Venkatrao was to stay at Takli, a village in the Ichalkaranji State, under strict supervision and restraint for one year; and the Inams which he had granted so promiscuously to his friends and sycophants during his wild career were to be resumed by the State. This arrangement was arrived at in 1794.

It should perhaps be emphasized here that the Poona Government agreed to these none too easy terms only because Parsharam Bhau and Raghunathrao Patwardhan had interceded and pleaded so hard in the interests of the Ichalkaranji State, pointing out that it was a State founded by Venkatrao Narayan I, the son-in-law of Balaji Pant, and that it had been maintained by Anubai, the daughter of the Peishwa Balaji.

Thus twice within a few years was the Ichalkaranji State threatened; twice was it on the point of being attached by the Peishwa. Parsharam Bhau had come to the rescue alone in 1776, and then eighteen years later had again saved it in conjunction with his cousin Raghunathrao, thus showing to the full that the Patwardhans gratefully returned in overflow-

ing measure the good services that had been done to their family by Naro Mahadev as well as his son Venkatrao.

With such terms as these agreed upon by Ramabai and the Peishwa, Venkatrao could do nothing but yield to the pressure, although he did so with a very bad grace. He took up his residence at Takli as ordered, where he continued in his dissolute life in so far as his very limited means permitted him. He continually opposed the Peishwa Government, and at times, in his less sober moments, vilified his wife and declaimed against the Administrator, Mahadaji Vithal. After a good deal of opposition, he finally consented to allow Ramabai to adopt a son, but in all other matters he insisted on having his own way. But life under such restraint as was imposed upon him, succeeding such a dissolute and wild career as he had enjoyed before, gradually affected his mind. After a short time at Takli he became depressed and disconsolate, a mental state which brought on perpetual restlessness. At last he lost his reason, and in one of his fits of madness swallowed some deadly poison which he had surreptitiously procured, and died on January 2, 1795.

The tale of Venkatrao is undoubtedly a sad one, even more so than that of his father. Narayanrao had failed because he was weak-minded and vacillating; Venkatrao failed because he was strong-minded and stubborn. The passion for self-indul-

gence which resulted in the ruin of the father also brought about the ruin of the son, even though it was a passion working in a different atmosphere and under different temperamental conditions. Venkatrao was admittedly brave and intelligent, but his inherited tendency to viciousness unfortunately prevented that courage and wisdom which he had inherited from being put to service in the interests of Ichalkaranji. And so two chapters in the history of Ichalkaranji must record two unfortunate failures of the noble family of Joshi-Ghorpades, for father and son contributed by their uncontrolled indulgence to a considerable loss of power and prestige of the Ichalkaranji State; and had it not been first of all for the statesmanship of the brave Queen Anubai and later for the courage and optimism of the long-suffering Ramabai, Ichalkaranji State would have been absorbed into the Peishwa's domain. Thus was Ichalkaranji twice saved by the personal efforts of the brave daughters of the State.

CHAPTER V.

Narayan Rao Babasaheb.

With the death of Venkatrao, the heir to the Ichalkaranji Gadi was Narayan Rao Babasaheb, who had just been adopted by Ramabai. The Peishwa Government, however, did not recognise the adoption immediately, because Nana Furnavees apparently wanted to exact as heavy a sum as possible from Ichalkaranji by way of Nazarana. But the favourable views of the Peishwa Government were demonstrated none the less, for Babasaheb was called upon by the Peishwa to be present with his troops on the celebrated battlefield of Kharda, in which the famous general Parsharam Bhau Patwardhan was wounded and Narayan Ghorpade ordered to guard the royal standard of the Mahrattas. The records show that he bravely justified his selection and had his services specially mentioned by Parasharam Bhau on return to Poona. Narayan Rao had many negotiations with the political officers of the Poona Darbar in order to get his adoption finally recognised and to have the attachment raised from his State. At last his appeals were successful and he was recognised as the Chief of Ichalkaranji. The misbehaviour of Venkatrao, however, was now more than ever realised, because the recognition of the adoption was an expensive matter for the State. Nazarana was fixed at two

lakhs of rupees and in addition to this, a succession fine of a sum of Rs. 56,000 was realised as Darbar expenses. Opportunity was also taken on this occasion to resume the three Inam villages of Kadlas, Papri and Bedag on grounds that the revenue of these villages would be utilised to maintain the Annachhatra that Venkatrao had been ordered to establish at Benares as penance for his participation in the rebellion of the pretending Peishwa Sukhnidhan. In the orders which were passed by the Peishwa Government recognising Narayan Rao's adoption, it was expressly stated, however, that all Inams, Jagheers, Haks and cash allowances granted from time to time to Ichalkaranji rulers by the Satara and Kolhapur Darbars would be continued undisturbed in the family.

With the success achieved in 1795 by Nana Furnavees at the Battle of Kharda, which was the last battle fought by the combined Mahratta Confederacy, he was able to restore to that Confederacy all the provinces that had been lost to Government in the fratricidal war against Raghoba. In a word, the Peishwa and Nana Furnavees were in that year within sight of a Mahratta universal empire in India, for it appeared that the members of the Mahratta Confederacy had now definitely realised that as long as they were united they could carry all before them, but that once they were divided, the fate of Maharashtra was sure. But just as the leaders of the Confeder-

acy had composed their differences and decided to stand together, a series of unfortunate events followed the success at Kharda. Sawai Madhavrao, who was the political centre of the Confederacy, committed suicide; and this sad episode was the beginning of the end of what Mr. Kincaid calls the Chitpavan Brahmin epoch. Bajirao II then became Peishwa, and Nana Furnavees found himself in the difficult position of being hated by his revengeful master as well as by the redoubtable Scindia who was the most powerful Ruler at that time; although in the interests of the administration their differences were patched up for a time, particularly those between the Peishwa and the Minister. But despite this compromise, Baji Rao acted in a way which was continually irritating Nana, and so at last this famous minister began to lose interest in his administration. Parasharam Bhau Patwardhan had also come into disfavour with the reigning Peishwa because he had espoused the cause of his cousin Chimnaji Appa, in punishment for which he was thrown into prison in the Fort of Mandavagam.

Up to this time, the Ichalkaranji State had held its own against Kolhapur by reason of the powerful aid given to the State by the Peishwa and the Patwardhans, but by the greatest misfortune this twofold assistance was cut off at the same time, and so the Maharaja of Kolhapur, quick to seek any opportunity for aggression against his neighbour, decided once more to

invade Ichalkaranji. Narayan Rao Babasaheb, Chief of Ichalkaranji, realising that it would be waste of men and money to meet the Kolhapur army without the aid of his old-time supporters, decided that discretion was the better part of valour, and so he sued for peace by promising to give a nazarana of Rs. 15,000 for the release of his villages and the Deshmukhi Watan that had been attached by Kolhapur. Apparently the Kolhapur Darbar was by no means enamoured of the terms offered by Babasaheb, and so the Maharaja's troops continued to plunder and burn the Ichalkaranji villages. Remonstrations from Babasaheb were ineffectual, and even when Nana Furnavees intervened, his waning power was unable to redress the wrongs being suffered by Ichalkaranji. And to make matters worse, Baji Rao, who seemed to be the main cause of all the trouble, attached the Deshmukhi haks which had been enjoyed by Ichalkaranji for more than 60 years in the Miraj District.

Thus the State which had owed its existence and its peaceful security to the Peishwa was now the victim of the machinations of Baji Rao and those who no longer cared to respect the prestige and heritage of faithful allies. Through the action of Baji Rao, Ichalkaranji lost for ever the Deshmukhi watan in Miraj District which was later given to the ancestors of the present Chief of Miraj Junior by the British Government at the termination of the Peishwa's rule.

But the disasters which came so suddenly and so quickly upon Ichalkaranji did not end with the ravages of Kolhapur. Flushed with success, the Panhala armies extended their march into the territories of the Peishwa while simultaneously the Maharaja of Satara commenced his invasion of the Peishwa's lands adjacent to his own territory. This double attack somewhat brought the Peishwa to his senses, and his first act was to release Parasharam Bhau Patwardhan from prison and to depute him to restore peace and order and to repel the invaders. Forgetting all previous quarrels and sinking all thought of personal revenge against Baji Rao, Parsharam Bhau at once sized up the position and quickly stemmed the attack from the Satara side. After consultation with Nana Furnavees, he invaded Kolhapur, and a desperate battle was fought at Patankudi in 1799 in the course of which Parasharam Bhau was killed by Kolhapur emissaries. The great State of Kolhapur had gradually been increasing in size and had been strengthening its armies in proportion to its extended jurisdiction. At the battle of Patankudi, the Maharaja of Kolhapur took the offensive and after a bombardment of guns by both sides, there was lively hand-to-hand fighting with swords. More than once the attacks of the Kolhapur Army were repulsed, but with the wounding of Ramchandra Pant Appa, the eldest son of Parasharam Bhau, the tide of fortune took a turn, and when Parashram Bhau himself received

severe wounds which were obviously mortal, the Peishwa's forces lost heart and retreated. Ramchandra Pant, stung with remorse and thirsting for revenge, rallied the troops and retrieved his father's defeat by besieging Kolhapur; but when on the death of Nana Furnavees he was deserted by Baji Rao, he was forced to raise the siege after suffering very heavy losses.

The Maharaja of Kolhapur, relieved of all anxiety regarding the future attitude of the Peishwa, once again turned his attention to Ichalkaranji, and he invaded the State and besieged the capital with a strong force. But Narayan Rao Babasaheb showed considerable generalship, and although many skirmishes were fought, the Kolhapur troops did not achieve any striking success. At last a treaty was effected between Ichalkaranji and Kolhapur through the intervention of Baba Maharaj of Nasipur. The siege was raised and for a time Ichalkaranji was once again left in peace. But it was only a matter of months before the Maharaja of Kolhapur was again seized with a desire to gain territory at the expense of his weakening neighbour, and so in 1801 he captured Shiradwad and Nandni, two villages near Ichalkaranji, and once more besieged the capital. But the Chief of Ichalkaranji once again gauged the exact position, and with a sudden outburst sallied forth from his Fort, attacked the Maharaja's camp despite a fierce cannonade, and completely defeated and routed the Kolhapur Forces, plundering the camp

and capturing some of their guns. Babasaheb himself participated in this attack and was wounded in the leg during the fighting.

Some princes would have been especially elated on gaining such an unexpected victory against the strong Kolhapur troops, but Babasaheb knew that he would still have to carry on a constant fight against Kolhapur if he wished to maintain his very existence. Though a brave general, Babasaheb was always opposed to fighting if it could be avoided, and so once more he opened negotiations with the Maharaja of Kolhapur through Nanasaheb Patankar for the release of his villages and the watan that had been attached. Kolhapur again agreed to peace provided a large Nazarana was paid by Ichalkaranji, but shortly afterwards went back upon his word, leaving Babasaheb no other alternative than once more to collect his army to recover his lost territory from the hands of the marauders from Panhala.

To return for a few moments to Poona politics, it is evident that during the reign of Baji Rao there was barely a semblance of Government, for Doulat Rao Scindia had made the Peishwa practically a cipher. Internal society was crumbling to pieces, and robbers and Pindharies looted and burned villages; whilst externally Yeshwantrao Holkar descended on Poona with a large army and defeated both Scindia and Baji Rao. It is not

surprising that, realising his own incompetence and faced with such a series of troubles, the Peishwa became disheartened and sought the support of the British as his only hope. The Treaty of Bassein was therefore signed in 1802. By some historians this treaty is considered to have been one of the most ignominious documents ever signed by a Peishwa, but whether it be regarded in that way or not, the fact remains that for the time being at least it saved the situation. The flight of the Peishwa had left the Poona Government in the hands of Yeshwantrao Holkar who, after placing Vinayakrao, the son of the Peishwa's adopted brother Amrutrao, on the throne, devoted his own time and energies to the plundering of Poona. But fortunately, under the provisions of the Treaty of Bassein, the British now took a definite hand in Poona politics, and early in 1803 the greatest general of that period, Arthur Wellesley, assembled a large force on the northern frontier of Madras. Within a month Wellesley had entered Poona which had been evacuated by Amrutrao to whom several of the Mahratta Chiefs had rallied. Disgusted with the union of the Peishwa with the English, Scindia, who previously had fought with the Peishwa, now deserted him, whilst Yeshwantrao Holkar, who now detested both the Peishwa and Scindia with equal hate, made no move to help or join either of them. The new Resident of the British Government at Poona was Mr. Mountstuart Elphinstone, and he



6. MAHADJI SCINDIA.

[6 *Facing page* 96.

managed with prudence and statesmanship gradually to produce order, and it was he who finally brought together in 1811 the representatives of Kolhapur and Ichalkaranji to discuss the vital question of subordination, a dispute in which he finally gave the decision in favour of Ichalkaranji.

During the decade between Wellesley's invasion of Poona and the death in 1813 of Shivaji the Great King of Kolhapur, the history of Ichalkaranji was one long tale of aggression on the part of Kolhapur. Shivaji was undoubtedly brave, wise, and magnanimous, but his activities were unfortunately wholly concentrated to wreak vengeance upon those who in any way opposed the ambitions of Kolhapur. During this time, therefore, his policy of definitely subjecting all his rivals brought the Ichalkaranji State to the verge of extinction.

It is particularly interesting to note that it was just at this time that the Raja of Kolhapur sought to place his army on a very firm basis by the introduction of outside military experts, for in a letter written in 1807 to the Resident of Poona, the newswriter at Kolhapur announced that the Raja had successfully negotiated with an Englishman from Goa, named Colonel Clements, by promising him the revenues and possession of Chikolee in return for entering the Kolhapur service. Further correspondence on this matter revealed that the Raja also took into his employ a French deserter. This is

not the occasion when we can explore the details of this little incident, but there certainly do not appear to be any records of this gullible English Colonel ever becoming Duke of Chikolee!

This policy of plundering, however, was not carried on without frequent intervention on the part of Mountstuart Elphinstone who, by ceaseless efforts and consummate tact, succeeded in 1813 and 1820 in at least reducing the plundering raids of Kolhapur, the Desai of Nipani, and other chiefs. Gradually he gave Maharashtra an orderly administration, but of course it was not possible for him, without using unnecessary force, completely to stop the raids of such a belligerent and ambitious State as Kolhapur, especially when its nearest neighbour was at this time too weak to offer much resistance.

But after the final fall of the Peishwa and the acquisition of Maharashtra by the English, Elphinstone in 1820 invited all the Mahratta Sardars and Jagheerdars in the Deccan to meet him in Poona. Narayan Rao Babasaheb was one of those who accepted the invitation. After the usual formalities of State were finished, Elphinstone made a proposal to Babasaheb that Ichalkaranji should enter into a Treaty with the British Government. Realising the wisdom of such a proposal and appreciating the influence and assistance that would be given when necessary by a responsible English representative, Narayan Rao accepted the proposal but urged that as the Suzerain Power, the

British Government was now bound to restore all the territory that had been assessed for the Nazarana of two lakhs that had been levied on the State at the time of his adoption, and also to release all the Watans and the Deshmukhi haks which had been attached by Bajirao. He also declared that the villages which had been forcibly seized at different times by the Kolhapur Darbar in defiance of definite treaties should be restored. In other words, if Ichalkaranji was given back that which had been unfairly seized from it, Narayan Rao Babasaheb intimated that he gladly recognised the Suzerain Power of the British. These claims were reasonable and just, and Mr. Elphinstone promised to do everything that he could; but for various reasons that promise was not realised, probably owing to the lack of perseverance on the part of Babasaheb.

Even after the establishment of the British rule in Maharashtra, the Maharaja of Kolhapur could not content himself with his own dominions nor could he refrain from endeavouring to reduce Ichalkaranji still further. When he invaded once again certain defenceless villages of the State and attached the Deshmukhi Watan that had been granted to Ichalkaranji by Shahu Maharaja of Satara, Narayan Babasaheb realised that once again it could be better to compromise than to continue the onesided warfare. Under the circumstances it was not probable that he would get very speedy redress from the British

administration, and so he agreed to pay Kolhapur an annual sum of Rs. 1250 on condition that the Maharaja would allow Ichalkaranji to enjoy in peace all its time-honoured haks and watans, without any incidence of service. This agreement was agreed to and signed by Kolhapur and Ichalkaranji in September 1820. But Kolhapur, maintaining its hereditary policy of reducing Ichalkaranji, continued to send raiding excursions into Ichalkaranji territory, and still refused to release the Deshmukhi Haks which had been attached. Realising the danger of the new position, Narayan Rao appealed to the Political Agent at Dharwar and the Commissioner at Poona for redress. These officials wrote to the Maharaja asking him not to disturb Ichalkaranji, but the Maharaja of Kolhapur paid no heed whatever to the letters. This is not surprising, for at this period the Kolhapur Darbar persistently defied the British Government and received many letters which in the course of regular politics would have been looked upon as definite ultimatums. For example, the remonstrances of Mr. Chaplin, the Commissioner at Poona, in the letter he wrote to Kolhapur dated October 1, 1822, cannot be regarded as anything else but an ultimatum:—"Ichalkaranjikar Ghorpade is a relative of the Peishwa. For a long time the Peishwa treated the family with great respect. The British Government have now succeeded the Peishwa and therefore it does not become the British Government to allow

that Sardar to be unjustly treated. Therefore I now write Your Highness that you should fix what may be your just prerogative over him, but do not impede his Doulat or destroy his property. Let this be done by Your Highness."

In fact, during the whole quinquennium from 1819-24 the British Government were continually interceding with Kolhapur on behalf of Ichalkaranji, whilst at times the intercession amounted to strong remonstrances and veiled threats. For example, in an interesting memorandum written by Mr. Chaplin on the "Eechulkurgkeeker affairs," this British political officer summarises the extraordinary conduct of the Kolhapur Darbar and its continued way of ignoring the British as well as appeals from the Chief of Ichalkaranji. This memorandum directly refers to the pillaging and capturing of villages that had belonged to Ichalkaranji "for a series of years," and asked that "restitutions might be made"; and it was in December, 1819, that a letter was written remonstrating with the Raja of Kolhapur "on his interfering with Inam villages," as those attacked appeared to be. Shortly afterwards a letter had to be sent by Mr. Chaplin objecting to the contemplated resumption by Kolhapur of the villages of Lat and Rangoli "which had been restored to Ichalkaranji through Mr. Elphinstone's intervention." All these remonstrances had only a partial effect, and so in October, 1822, Mr. Chaplin sent a very strong letter to the

Kolhapur Darbar (as several previous ones were unheeded) "in the terms desired by Government charging him to continue the Eechulkgeeker rights as they had been conferred by the Peishwa."

It is particularly interesting to note that in the decade immediately following the downfall of the Peishwas, the Raja of Kolhapur gave a great amount of trouble to the British Government by adopting a policy of wanton aggression all round. There are on record a remarkable series of letters and reports from officials relative to his amazing conduct, all of which reveal very clearly how little, under the circumstances, the Ichalkaranji State could expect fair play from its powerful and aggressive neighbour.

In a letter written by the Governor of Bombay to His Highness the Raja in 1825, strong objection was taken to the way in which the Raja was unauthorisedly demanding money from the Inam lands, and in the course of this letter it was stated that "there is no doubt whatever that it was far from the intention of the British Government that any persons in districts ceded to Your Highness should lose their rights by the transfer, and as the cession was a perfectly gratuitous act of friendship on the part of the British Government, that Government is entitled to expect from you some attention to its wishes on points like the present, even if it were not bound by treaty

to attend to its advice." Continuing the Governor said:—

"I am sorry to say that this is not the only instance in which I have heard of Your Highness' encroachments on the rights of others, although in several of them the British Government is less directly concerned. I cannot avoid pointing out to you as a sincere friend and well-wisher the consequence of such a system to yourself, especially as at the same time that you render your own chiefs and subjects your enemies by your departure from the established usage, you also estrange the British Government so as to prevent its interposing to assist you against the effects of the general discontent."

A still more illuminating description of the attitude and policy of the Raja at that time is revealed in a special minute prepared by the Governor of Bombay in 1826 in reviewing the extraordinary conduct of the Raja following the conquest of the Peishwa, which so materially altered the political situation of Kolhapur.

This minute is a masterly survey of the conduct of the Raja from the time he was delivered by the British out of the hands of Appa Desai until he so deliberately and foolishly flouted the British as to necessitate a military campaign against him; and shows that he regarded neither treaties nor custom nor propriety nor politics in his mad quest for power and dominion, incidentally revealing more than ever what little chance

Ichalkaranji had against such an enemy. Following the conquest of the Peshwa's territory, says the Minute, the Raja's "rivals and enemies were at once restrained from injuring him by the strict system of the British Government whose subjects they had become; and his own strength already recruited by the tranquillity he had enjoyed under our protection was increased by the grant of Chickoree and Manowlee which nearly doubled his revenue. The independence thus conferred on the Raja might not, however, have led to abuse had it not fallen into the hands of a Prince of so headstrong, violent, and capricious a temper as the one with whom we have now to deal.

"The present Raja was scarcely invested with the Government when he showed a desire to oppress his subjects, to encroach on his neighbours and to disregard the advice and remonstrances of the British Government.

"At length the Raja extended his encroachments to Chiefs who had been under the protection of the Peishwa's Government and whom we as his successors were equally bound to protect.

"The most essential article for our future tranquillity is that the Raja should bind himself to be guided by our advice in all points likely to affect the public tranquillity either within or without his territory. Should he agree to those terms we ought to leave him entirely uncontrolled in his domestic Govern-

ment, except in cases strictly within the class provided for in this new agreement, and if he should refuse to accede, he must be considered as an open enemy and the least we should do would be to deprive him of the Districts lately granted of which he has made so bad a use."

From this lengthy extract it is very clear that little credence should have been given to the many claims made by Kolhapur on Ichalkaranji. Knowing the grab-all tendencies of the Raja and his policy of demanding by bluff or force what he could not obtain by legal means, it should have been the duty of the British Government to have examined more carefully the defence put up by Ichalkaranji against aggressions of Kolhapur. But, as history has shown, for some inexplicable reason, even under these conditions, the demands of Kolhapur were often given more heed than the rights of Ichalkaranji, whilst when in later years Kolhapur became less truculent, Ichalkaranji State was put under the Raja's control as a Feudatory largely to keep him quiet!

These strong letters ultimately had the desired effect in stopping Kolhapur from invading Ichalkaranji, but unfortunately at the same time they implied the recognition of the right of Kolhapur to levy certain dues on Ichalkaranji, thus establishing to that extent at least the subordination of Ichalkaranji to Kolhapur.

Further questions of dispute between these two States were also taken to the British Government for decision. In 1825 the bone of contention was the villages of dual control in the Ajra Pargana, and these were arbitrated by the British Government, by whose award 75 villages were given into the exclusive possession of Ichalkaranji and 22 to Kolhapur. In the same year the British Government had to send a fully equipped army of six thousand against Kolhapur in order to enforce the rights of the English Administration. The Maharaja of Kolhapur at first thought of fighting, but when the British army arrived on the spot he changed his mind and instead of fighting a vigorous defensive action, fired a salute of guns to welcome the British Army; and sued for peace. In the treaty which was the result of this expedition, the Maharaja of Kolhapur engaged "never to molest Hindu Rao Ghatge of Kagal or Narayen Rao Ghorpade of Ichalkaranji in the enjoyment of their respective lands and rights according to ancient custom." In virtue of this treaty, the Maharaja of Kolhapur released the Deshmukhi Watans and paid in cash a sum of nearly Rs. 20,000 as arrears of the income of the Deshmukhi that was under attachment.

Narayan Babasaheb died in January 3, 1827, at the age of 50. He left behind him his wife Gangabai, two sons, and five daughters. The sons Venkatrao and Keshavrao succeeded

him in turn, and whilst his five daughters were married into the family of the Patwardhan Chiefs, Venkatrao married the daughter of Chintamanrao Patwardhan, the Ruling Chief of Sangli. This series of marital alliances established a friendship between these two noble families of the Deccan that has existed for many years.

Narayan Rao does not appear to have been an outstanding ruler or statesman. But he lived in a very difficult and critical period, and probably his belief that discretion was the better part of valour was of greater service to his State than would have been the policy of a more ambitious ruler. He was, however, both courageous and discreet, and always rose to the occasion when the circumstances of the State demanded it. He certainly upheld the reputation of the founders of the State, for to him must be given the credit, if not of building up a State, at least of preserving it more or less intact against tremendous odds.

CHAPTER VI.

Venkatrao Narayanrao III and Keshavrao Tatyasaheb.

Immediately following the death of Narayan Rao Babasaheb, the Kolhapur Raja made efforts to annex the Ichalkaranji State, but in view of the strong evidence produced by the State from the Peishwa's Daftar, the British Government refused to accept this unjustifiable claim of Kolhapur and informed the Darbar that it had no right to annex the State. In consonance with the previous policy and aspirations of Kolhapur, the Raja resented the refusal of the British Government and, gathering together a large and powerful army, resolved to take by force what he had failed to obtain by annexation. After invading the territory of the Chief of Kagal, the Patwardhan Chief of Chinchni, and the villages of Bhau Maharaja, the Maharaja arrived in person to invade Ichalkaranji, having sent half his army to Ajra to capture that thana. There were almost daily skirmishes at Ichalkaranji between the opposing forces, but Venkatrao managed to withstand the attack of Kolhapur on receiving the assistance of the Patwardhan Chiefs of Sangli and Kurundwad. Venkatrao also sent his Vakil to Dharwar to explain the whole position to the Collector there who was then the Political Agent of the Southern Mahratta Country. Realising the justice of the objections put forward by the Ichalkaranji

Chief and receiving complaints from other aggrieved parties, the Bombay Government ordered Mr. Nisbet, the Collector at Dharwar, to march to Ichalkaranji without delay and punish the offending party. Hearing of the approach of the British, the Raja retreated to his own capital but was followed there by Mr. Nisbet . Kolhapur was besieged once again by the British army, and this time the Raja and his advisers were shut up in the royal palace for three days, whilst sections of the British army stormed and captured most of the Forts in the District. Recognising the uselessness and the danger of any further resistance, the Raja quietly agreed on October 23, 1827, to the terms of a treaty dictated by Mr. Nisbet. This treaty is an important one, as it confirms the guarantee given to Ichalkaranji by the third article of the treaty of the previous year, and in its seventh article it describes Ichalkaranji along with certain other Chiefs as being "under the protection of the British Government." It also compelled the Maharaja of Kolhapur to make good the loss of property which Ichalkaranji had sustained by the various predatory raids, and so Ichalkaranji received from Kolhapur about half a lakh of rupees as compensation. This proved to be the last raid ever made by the Kolhapur Darbar for compelling Ichalkaranji into submission as his feudatory. For 53 years Ichalkaranji Rulers had been troubled by the aggressions of Kolhapur, and it stands greatly

to their credit that in spite of the greatest difficulties and of being outnumbered by a much stronger Power, the brave little State managed to hold its own; and the fact that in turn Ichalkaranji received the support of the Ghorpades, the Patwardhans, the Peishwas, and the British reveals not only the justice of its claim but also the continued loyalty of the Rulers of the State to its friends and to its Suzerain Power.

But although the raids ended with the signing of the 1827 treaty, the question of the relationship between Kolhapur and Ichalkaranji was a vigorous subject of discussion for several years more. This question is known as the Ilakha Prakarana, or the settlement of the political relations between the two States. Despite the treaty that had been made, the cause of dispute between the parties remained, and the scene of battle was shifted from gory fields to the Darbar-room of the Political Agent. Kolhapur contended that Ichalkaranji was its creation and hence was a subject State, whilst Ichalkaranji in challenging this proved by means of incontestable evidence that the State had been founded under the aegis of and by the permission of the paramount Satara Raja.

The evidence produced by Ichalkaranji may be divided into the following three sections:—

(1) Sanads of Jagheers, Inams and Haks, all of which were either granted or confirmed by Shahu Maharaja of Satara.

(2) The position of a first-class Sardar occupied by the Rulers of Ichalkaranji in the Courts of the Peishwa and Satara Governments and the performance of service under Satara for more than 100 years. During this period, there was not a single instance of any service rendered by Ichalkaranji to Kolhapur.

(3) The treatment given to Ichalkaranji by the British Government who succeeded the Peishwa was abundant proof that the State was recognised by the new Government as its feudatory.

In face of evidence such as this, which was proved up to the hilt by the Ichalkaranji ambassadors, and after making its own independent investigations, the Bombay Government gave its decision in favour of Ichalkaranji, communicating that decision to Venkatrao Saheb on September 1, 1835. But Venkatrao died on February 16, 1838, and was succeeded by his younger brother Keshavrao Tatyasaheb, as Venkatrao had no children.

Seldom has there been a more difficult political question to decide than that of the jurisdiction over Ichalkaranji, and the fact that even a hundred years ago the various British officers differed strongly in their opinions of the exact situation makes it all the more difficult to come to an accurate decision to-day. The kernel of the problem is, to use the words of Elphinstone, whether "the authority of Kolhapur was abrogated by the exercise of sovereign rights over his subjects on the part

of the Peishwa," and out of this intricate point arises the further question as to whether the British as the Peishwa's successors could exercise the same power and perform the same acts, "just or unjust," merely because they had succeeded to the jurisdiction of the Peishwa. Certain of the British officers, however, considered after the Conquest that much of the Peishwa's power and dominion was solely the result of a "spirit of crafty encroachment" by which "he ultimately placed the Royal Seal of Satara in Commission and constituted himself the Sovereign." Emphasis was also placed on the admitted fact that the Raja of Kolhapur never acknowledged the supremacy of the Peishwa over himself or over his kinsman the Raja of Satara; but one cannot help remarking that in India as elsewhere, might was right, so that as long as the Raja of Kolhapur was not strong enough to defeat the Peishwa and capture all his territory, Kolhapur had to be content with a mere theoretical denial of the sovereignty of the Peishwa and a more or less feeble denunciation of him as a usurper.

Elphinstone and those who were inclined to place Ichalkaranji under the power of the Kolhapur Raja also maintained that the great friendship of the Peishwa towards the feudatory was partly the result of family connections, for one of the Chiefs of Ichalkaranji married the daughter of one of the Peishwas, which meant that so long as the interest occasioned



7. SHRIMANT GOVINDRAO ABASAHEB, THE LATE CHIEF OF ICHALKARANJI.

[7 Facing page 112.

by this connection lasted, the Peishwas showed considerable attention and protection to Ichalkaranji against Kolhapur. Then forgetting the treaty of 1799, which was forced by the Peishwa at the very gates of Kolhapur, the supporters of the latter pin their faith to the Treaty of September 18, 1822, in which the relationship of the Chief of Ichalkaranji both to the British Government and the Raja of Kolhapur was clearly laid down. Yet although at that time Ichalkaranji was made subject to Kolhapur, the Treaty was modified or tempered by the following striking words: "But while we do not intend to interfere between the Raja and his dependents, yet as the Ichalkaranjikar was so long upheld by the Peishwa, it would be injurious to the reputation of the British Government, which has succeeded to his place, to allow that Chief now to suffer injustice. The British Government must therefore insist on the Raja of Kolhapur forbearing from any proceeding further than may be necessary to assert his own authority without threatening the existence or encroaching on the rights of this Chieftain."

These extracts have been given in accordance with the canons of historical research in order to relate both sides of the case, and it must be left to the reader to decide whether Ichalkaranji has been badly treated or not. It is quite possible, of course, that theoretically Kolhapur was always superior to the Peishwa regime; yet the very fact that the Peishwas so often

defeated the Kolhapur armies and definitely dictated to the Panhala Rajas as to their future conduct, suggests that in actual practice the Poona Government was a greater and more important Power than that of Kolhapur. The history of India, and even of the British in India, is one long tale of the survival of the fittest and the superiority of the stronger force; and not even Elphinstone would have dared suggest that Kolhapur could and should have lorded it over the British merely because the Raja was a descendant of Shivaji and because he styled himself "the Presence."

But perhaps the most important feature of this political tangle is the fact that successive Political Agents at Kolhapur differed vitally after studying the same historical documents. For example, in 1835 Mr. Baber was convinced that Ichalkaranji was absolutely independent of Kolhapur, and his point of view was upheld by His Lordship the Governor-in-Council who said that "the Raja of Kolhapur should not be allowed to exercise any degree of interference or authority over the Ichalkaranji, he being under our protection and the British Government alone being his Paramount Sovereign." But Mr. Dunlop, who succeeded Mr. Baber, took a different view, declaring that some of the sanads possessed by Ichalkaranji were originally derived from Santaji Ghorpade, the hereditary Sennapati of Kolhapur; and yet even Mr. Dunlop had his hesitation moments,

for he added that the question at issue was whether the documents in the shape of treaties and protection received from the Peishwa were not sufficient to prove that the original sovereignty of Kolhapur had been abrogated.

After summarising and reviewing the conflicting arguments of these two experienced British officers, Mr. Shaw, a later Political Agent, wrote to Government that in his opinion there was not the slightest doubt that the authority of Kolhapur had been abrogated and that sovereignty over the Ichalkaranji jahagir had been vested in the Peishwa. "The British Government, as the successor to the Peishwa, succeded to all his rights, and has the power to declare the Ichalkaranji State free of all control and service; but as the successor to the Peishwa's rights it would not only be an impolitic question to attempt to determine how these rights were acquired, but I do not consider it would be justice, contrary to the inclination and wishes of the Ichalkaranji State, to restore it to the authority and jurisdiction of Kolhapur, even if the Kolhapur Government had power to retain and govern it."

That is to say, the whole question rested on the sovereignty of the Peishwa's Government, and he would be a very bold historian who would dare suggest that the Peishwa exercised no superior or sovereign powers over Kolhapur, and that the Peishwa's acts, "whether just or unjust, were always the acts of

sovereignty, and as such constituted him the sovereign over the Jahagir of Ichalkaranji, abrogating the power of Kolhapur. Ichalkaranji therefore apparently became as a matter of succession a dependent to the British Government which succeeded to the rights of the Peishwa as they stood at the moment of his deposition."

Perhaps no more need be said on this vexed question, but it is evident that there are two points of view, both of which can be documented. The Bombay Government certainly made various detailed investigations into the dispute, and the unbiassed historian at this distance of time can hardly decide whether the facts available then justified the handing over of Ichalkaranji to the control of Kolhapur. All that can be said is that the documents available now seem to indicate that the State should be subject only to the successors of the Peishwa, namely, the British Government.

But soon after the succession the attacks on Ichalkaranji were once again renewed, although this time the aggressor was not Kolhapur but its other neighbour, Savantwadi, the Fond Savants raising a rebellion in Savantwadi and making several raids against Ichalkaranji villages in the vicinity. The Savants had been giving considerable anxiety and trouble to the British Government, and several very strong letters were sent. Then seeing that letter-writing was of no avail, the British sent an

expeditionary force to teach the Savants a lesson, and thus the rebellion within the State and the raids outside into Ichalkaranji were put down by the British army. But once more the clash of arms only changed into a clash of words, for a question arose about the jurisdiction of the villages of Amboli and Gela, two hamlets on the frontiers of Savantwadi and Ichalkaranji. The Savants claimed these villages in spite of the fact that they were definitely apportioned to Ichalkaranji in the award that had been made in 1825 between Ichalkaranji and Kolhapur by the British Government. Ichalkaranji admitted that Savantwadi had a share in the revenue of these villages but insisted that the jurisdiction of them remained with Keshavrao Tatyasaheb. Once more the Bombay Government was made arbitrator, and after considerable investigation decided the case in 1845 in favour of Savantwadi.

Whilst this dispute was going on between Ichalkaranji and Savantwadi, the affairs of Kolhapur were permitted to get into a hopeless condition of corruption and misrule during the Regency of the Divansaheb, as the aunt of the young Raja of Kolhapur was called. At last the Bombay Government had to intervene, and a Government Karbhari was appointed to manage the Kolhapur administration. As might have been expected, such a radical innovation in a State which had for so many years been so self-contained, so ambitious, and so

aggressive, gave rise first to disappointment, then to discontent, and finally to disaffection among the officials and well-wishers of the State. This disaffection quickly spread and finally burst in the form of the famous rebellion of the permanent garrisons of the Forts of Samangad and Bhudagad in the south of Kolhapur. This rebellion was so deep-seated and based on such strong feelings that the Bombay Government found it necessary in 1845 to send a strong army to fight against the rebels entrenched in the hill-forts of Kolhapur. For a while no surrender seemed forthcoming, and it was only when the British army showed its real mettle by storming the forts that the rebels surrendered. It was during this insurrection that Keshavrao Tatyasaheb was able to show his appreciation of the justice and friendship of the British towards him by giving valuable assistance to the army against the Kolhapur rebels, services which were greatly appreciated by the Government.

For a few years there was comparative quietness in the Southern Mahratta Country, due to the control exercised by the Bombay Government; but the Kolhapur Darbar again raised the Ilakha Prakarana. The pros and cons of the old-time dispute were once more discussed and debated, this time at very great length, and at last to the keen disappointment and chagrin of Ichalkaranji, the Government in 1847 set aside the decision of 1835 and declared the Chief of Ichalkaranji to be

a feudatory of the Raja of Kolhapur. This decision proved to be the final one, thus fixing the seal of settlement on a long-standing dispute between the neighbouring States.

It is not surprising, of course, that this decision was considered unjust by Keshavrao, who protested vigorously against the reversal of an opinion which had previously been given by the British Government at a time when it was recognised that the arrogancy of Kolhapur and the ambitious schemes of aggression of that Darbar had led them into very unfair ways. Seeing that his protests were of no avail, the Ichalkaranji Chief became highly incensed, and intimated to the British that he could not remain on the Gadi as a feudatory of Kolhapur, and was therefore proposing to abdicate and retire to Benares. Realising that such an act would be still more harmful to Ichalkaranji than remaining on the throne as a feudatory, the Chiefs of Sangli and Miraj (Junior), who was the brother-in-law of Keshavrao Tatyasaheb, intervened, and with the assistance of Captain Graham ultimately persuaded Keshavrao that the orders of the Bombay Government were final. There is no doubt, however, that this persuasion was largely due to the assurance given to the Ichalkaranji Chief that the subordination of the State to Kolhapur was only formal, for the records show that it was only after the execution of a special Agreement drawn up in 1847 under the orders of

the Government between Captain Graham, the Political Superintendent of Kolhapur, and Keshavrao Tatyasaheb of Ichalkaranji that the Chief consented to acknowledge the supremacy of Kolhapur. This agreement definitely secured to Ichalkaranji, among other things, complete internal autonomy, and also conferred upon it the dignity and position of a mediatized State from that time under the special protection and guarantee of the British Government. The considerations that weighed with Government in entering upon this agreement are concisely expressed by Captain Graham in his official report, and are so important that they must find a place even in this brief resume of the chequered career of Ichalkaranji:—

"Major Reeves, the Political Agent of the Southern Mahratta Country States, recognises that the Chief should be treated more in the character of an ally than as a subordinate Chief on account of the connection both of himself and his ancestors with the Peishwa which ensured him the utmost deference and forbearance from the Kolhapur State, and that the history of his family and the fact of a long period of independence from the supremacy of Kolhapur, together with the devotion to the British displayed throughout the late insurrection, may plead in his behalf in consideration of his request for a future guarantee of rights from the British Government."

This agreement was acted upon during the life-time of the

grand-father, uncle and father of the present Chief, but for reasons which cannot be adequately explained here, an opportunity was taken on the recommendation of the Political Agent to rescind the special concessions given to Ichalkaranji by this Agreement when in 1876 the present Chief was adopted and installed on the Gadi. He was then a minor and therefore not in a position to defend his rights or to dispute the summary orders passed against the permanent status and privileges of Ichalkaranji. Thus it was that, although between 1847 and 1876, Ichalkaranji occupied a much higher status than the other principal feudatories of Kolhapur, after that year it was reduced in status and placed on the same level. It does not and should not come within the purview of this history to discuss in detail the political aspects of the action of Government half a century ago, but it will be for the historian of the future to judge how far those later orders were justified and why there were such disappointing changes of mind made by the Bombay Government in the years that followed their original decision after the first investigation in 1835. But it should perhaps be observed here that there is little doubt that in 1835 there was more reliable and contemporaneous evidence available regarding the real relationship between Ichalkaranji and Kolhapur than there was either in 1847 when the first reversal of opinion took place or in 1876 when the second

diminution of status was announced.

Both Venkatrao Saheb and Keshavrao Tatyasaheb were noble gentlemen free from any vices of power or wealth. They did not have the opportunities that were given to their predecessors to distinguish themselves either on the battlefield or in the Council chamber, for both of them ruled at a time when the British Government were paramount in Maharashtra and when the utmost that any Ruler could do was to place his evidence before the Political Agent and wait for a final decision which brooked no denial. Neither of these rulers, therefore, can be said to have distinguished himself, although perhaps had either been of a greater political turn of mind and possessed of a little more strategy, he might have been able to meet the claims of the Kolhapur Darbar in a way which would have saved the State from that loss of dignity which it ultimately suffered. It does not always pay to be scrupulously innocent in politics, and because of that, Ichalkaranji is now a feudatory of a State which was always its enemy and which spared no pains from the very outset either to annex it or bring it into subjection. That at least is what history has revealed.

Like his elder brother, Keshsavrao Tatyasaheb died without leaving any male issue, which meant that in 1852 adoption had to be resorted to in order to preserve what little rights of jurisdiction and administration remained to Ichalkaranji.

CHAPTER VII.

Perilous Days.

About the middle of the nineteenth century the State of Ichalkaranji was called upon to face another great crisis which nearly brought about its extinction as far as the regular powers of jurisdiction were concerned. On the death of Keshavrao Tatyasaheb in 1852, his wife Yeshodabai adopted, with the consent of her mother-in-law, a young boy from the Huparikar family of the Joshis. The adoption was recognised by the British Government, but as the young boy Venkatrao was a minor, Government appointed an Administrator. Venkatrao was married the next year, but unfortunately for Ichalkaranji State he died immediately afterwards in 1854, a calamity which produced a real crisis in the history of Ichalkaranji. At that time Lord Dalhousie's policy of annexation of State and lands in cases of maladministration or the absence of natural heirs was at its height. This general policy was serious enough under ordinary circumstances, but for Ichalkaranji it almost proved a deathblow. By reason of the penalties imposed upon Kolhapur State after the insurrection of 1844-45, Kolhapur owed the British Government an enormous debt which there seemed little chance of its being able to pay within a generation or two. The Government of Bombay therefore looked upon the death

of the young minor Venkatrao as an opportunity to bring into operation the policy of annexation and also as a means of solving a difficult financial problem in connection with Kolhapur. Government therefore decided to take over the State of Ichalkaranji on behalf of the Raja of Kolhapur and to transfer it in full sovereignty to the British Government in part liquidation of the debt due from Kolhapur.

This decision was naturally very disappointing and discouraging to the ruling family of Ichalkaranji, and so Yeshodabai and her mother-in-law strongly protested against the resumption of the State, sending frequent memorials to Government describing the injustice which Ichalkaranji thought was being done. Realising that they were fighting for the very existence of a State which had made so proud a name for itself in its chequered career, and that they were seeking to preserve the honoured name of a courageous series of ancestors, these two ladies made out a strong case against the British resolution to resume the State. They based their claim on the Inam tenure of their lands, its long enjoyment, and the concession made by Government in the Agreement of 1847, also pointing out the definite distinction between a Saranjam and an Inam. They quoted various precedents and orders passed by former administrators of the British Government sanctioning adoption in accordance with the established custom of Maharashtra for

many centuries. But in spite of the strong case that was made out and of the many appeals that these ladies made, Government decided that they could not alter their decision. Yeshodabai then appealed to the highest authority in England against what she thought was an unjust and high-handed decision of the Government in India; but all to no avail. The State of Ichalkaranji was attached at last by the Bombay Government; but for various reasons a delay of eight years occurred before the final arrangements for the resumption were made, a delay which undoubtedly was a blessing in disguise for Ichalkaranji.

The annexation policy of Lord Dalhousie, a very autocratic and powerful representative of the British Government, had naturally provoked considerable discontent among the landed aristocracy of the country. Just how this discontent would finally have manifested itself it is difficult to say, but just then a series of events occurred which, sad and appalling though they were, changed the whole atmosphere of the country and brought about an announcement of a more sympathetic policy on the part of the British Government. It was at this time that the Indian sepoys were so dissatisfied with Government that they took advantage of the wave of discontent which was sweeping all over the country, and burst into revolt. There is no need here to deal even briefly with the main facts connected with what is known as the Indian Mutiny. The whole country was

ablaze with strife, and religious prejudices unfortunately fanned the flames. For a time the outlook was very black indeed, but British firmness, British organization and British military strength, coupled with the patriotism of the majority of the powerful Jagheerdars, Princes and Chiefs, and a large section of loyal people, resulted in the situation being saved. The mutiny was suppressed; but the causes of the revolt became so very apparent that statesmen and politicians in England seriously questioned the wisdom of the all-round policy of annexation which had been adopted by Lord Dalhousie and the East India Company. There arose great indignation against what was believed to be the more or less irresponsible rule of the Company, and the result was that the English Parliament assumed in the name of Queen Victoria the great and glorious responsibilities of governing India. Her Majesty the Queen issued in her own name the celebrated proclamation of 1858 solemnly assuring the Princes, Nobles and people of India that their life and property, their religion, their time-honoured rights, manners and customs, would be held sacred and would never be violated. And by reaffirming the sanctity of the Hindu laws and granting Sanads of adoption to the ruling Princes, the harm which had been done and was being done by the policy of annexation and no adoption was largely counteracted.

Owing to the Mutiny the orders of resumption which had

been passed in the case of Ichalkaranji were kept in abeyance for some time; but when the revolt was quelled and the British Government as such definitely took over the administration of the Indian Empire, the Government of Bombay of its own accord recommended the reconsideration of the orders relating to the future of Ichalkaranji. In submitting the proposals of the Bombay Government to England, Mr. Anderson, who was then Joint Secretary to the Government of Bombay and for a long time Political Superintendent at Kolhapur, summarised the position in the following words:—

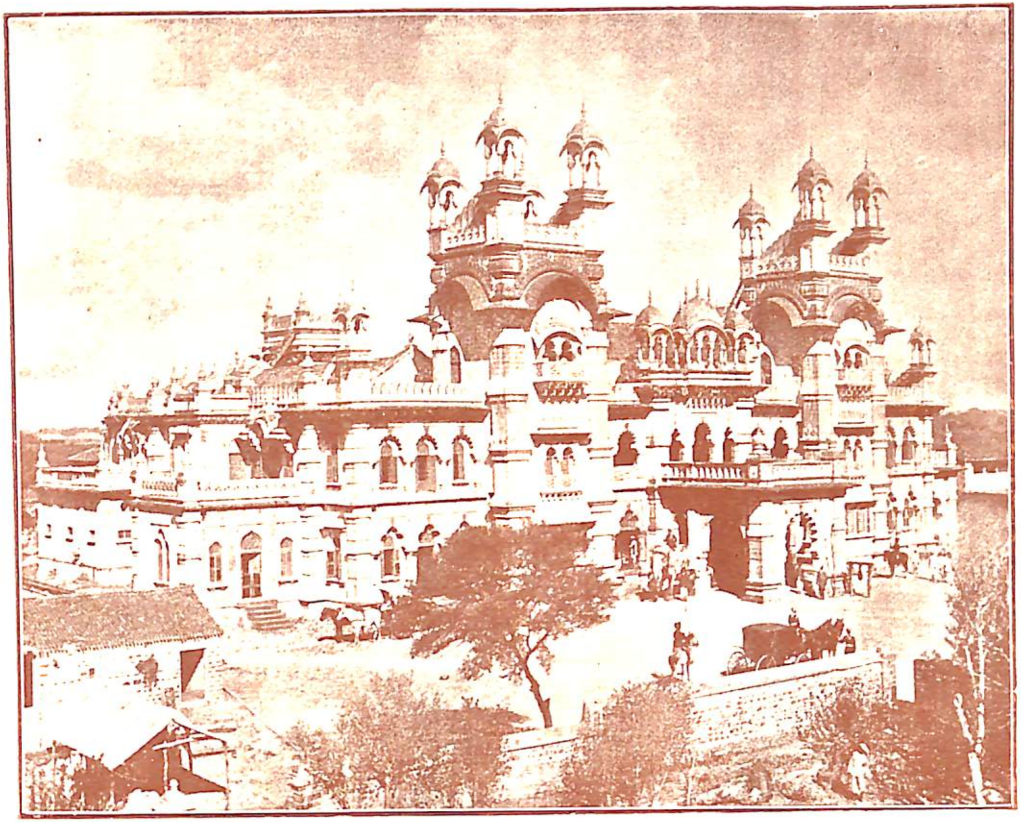
"Ichalkaranji is an older state than Kolhapur; the family on account of its inter-marriages with the Peishwas and other powerful princes, is regarded with great respect by the general population; the Chief of Ichalkaranji is always viewed by the Patwardhans as the representative of the founder of their fortunes; Kolhapur was bound by treaty never to molest the Chief of Ichalkaranji in the enjoyment of his lands and rights according to ancient customs; the custom in the Kolhapur State is to grant adoptions; Ichalkaranji was loyal in 1844-45 when Kolhapur was convulsed with rebellion; and to absorb Ichalkaranji in order to relieve Kolhapur of debts consequent on rebellion is to punish the State which behaved well for the benefit of the State which behaved ill."

It is not surprising, in view of this very clear-cut, honest,

and open-minded summary of Ichalkaranji's claims, that the arguments weighed strongly with the authorities at home and that the Secretary of State allowed the continuance of the State by permitting the adoption. The only remarkable thing is that these arguments were not regarded as sufficiently strong when the matter was under consideration in the days of the East India Company just before the Mutiny.

Thus once again it was the ladies of Ichalkaranji who saved the State in a time of peril.

In 1864 they adopted a boy from the Tasgaon family of the Joshis, an adoption which was confirmed by the Governments of Bombay and Calcutta and which, as it were, gave a new birth to the State of Ichalkaranji. This adopted heir was Govindrao, who early gave promise of a successful administrator. He was an intelligent youth who quickly distinguished himself both as a scholar and as a statesman, and was the first Chief to matriculate from the Deccan. He was very strict in all his principles and insisted on the sternest disciplinary conduct from all who were under him. He came of age in 1874 and was at once invested with all the powers of a Chief, but unfortunately he died after a short rule of eighteen months. He had no children, and therefore Government was once again asked to permit the wife of Govindrao Abbasaheb to adopt a son. There were eight claimants from the



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different branches of the Joshi family, all of whose histories and characters were carefully inspected by the young widow in consultation with the Political Agent of Kolhapur. Both of them finally agreed that Gopalrao, the youngest son of Laxmanrao Joshi residing at Karkham in the Sholapur District, was the best selection. At that time Gopalrao was only five years old, but the happy choice has been fully justified. The boy was named Narayanrao Babasaheb, and an adoption was celebrated with great pomp and enthusiasm on August 10, 1876, the State paying a Nazarana of Rs. 1,70,000 to the Kolhapur Darbar at that time.

This survey brings us to the present ruling Chief of Ichalkaranji, whose administration will be briefly reviewed in the next and the last chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

Narayanrao Babasaheb.

Shrimant Narayanrao Babasaheb is the present Ruling Chief of Ichalkaranji, and is a most enlightened Ruler revealing the combination of western influence with the advanced environments of modern India. Immediately after the adoption ceremony in 1876, arrangements were made to educate the young lad in the best possible way, and he was first taken to Kolhapur for English and higher education at the Rajaram High School. The Bombay Government had at that time taken special measures to open a class in the College at Kolhapur for the adequate education of the sons of the Chiefs and Sardars in the Southern Mahratta Country, and consequently among the contemporaries of the young Chief of Ichalkaranji was Shrimant Babasaheb the present Pant Pratinidhi of Vishalgad. By close application of exemplary diligence and the fullest use of his inherent capabilities, Babasaheb soon distinguished himself in this special class, and from it in 1888 passed the Matriculation examination of the University of Bombay with distinction. He then won a scholarship at the Rajaram College which he relinquished in favour of the next youth on the list, and himself joined the Previous Class at the Rajaram College. It was at this stage that his own desire to obtain a most comprehensive education possibly led to his inducing his guardians to send him

to the Elphinstone College in Bombay under the principalship of Dr. Wordsworth. This eminent Doctor, who was as great a scholar of English literature as he was of History and Philosophy, took a keen personal interest in the education and welfare of all his students. Narayanrao Babasaheb proved himself to be an apt and energetic pupil, and turned to very good account the personal attention paid to him by Dr. Wordsworth. History and economics were the subjects which the young Chief liked the best, and in these as well as other optional subjects soon showed his proficiency. He then regularly attended the Government Law School and manifested the greatest interest in the Bombay High Court proceedings in order to obtain a thorough grounding in law to help him in his future administration and to enable him to discharge his high and responsible duties as a ruler with fairness and impartiality. An interesting side-light of the young prince's character might perhaps here be mentioned. On his way from Ichalkaranji to Bombay in those early days of education, Shrimant Babasaheb always made a point of visiting the old friend of the family, the late Rao Bahadur Mahadev Govind Ranade, and there is no doubt that the advice which was given by this universally-respected patriarch, and which was accepted so gratefully by the young Ruler, has had a very great beneficial effect on his ultimate career.

Whilst at school, Shrimant Babasaheb's physical constitution was strong and he took great pleasure in and manifested much activity in games and sports. Also it might be mentioned he was a very keen shikari, but unfortunately was injured on one occasion in those early days in one of the hunting parties at Amba. He came of age in 1892 and in that year was installed on the Gadi and invested with powers of rulership. He was married to Shrimati Gangabai, the present Ranisaheb, who is a lady of high culture, strong character, and congenial temperament. She is very strict in her religious observances and has always given a very healthy tone to women's society in the State. Her strong interest in the progress of women has very materially assisted the cause of female education, and more than once Shrimant Babasaheb has been warmly congratulated by his many friends on having been blessed with such a useful and noble-minded life companion.

Since his installation on the Gadi, Shrimant Babasaheb has introduced many reforms in his State. Knowing full well the value of education, he has done more than could be legitimately expected to reduce illiteracy to a minimum. Primary education is free and he has doubled the number of schools within his territorial limits, as well as opened a full-fledged high school known as the Govindrao High School which has been built and named in memory of his beloved father, and at which many

scholarships are awarded to poor and deserving students, irrespective of caste, creed, or colour, with a view to inducing them to prosecute their college and other advanced studies. In addition to the local facilities for education, the Chiefsaheb has created from out of his own personal savings a trust which is known as the Ichalkaranji Education Endowment Fund, which is especially designed to help poor deserving students to carry on higher studies locally as well as in foreign countries in various departments such as military, educational, industrial and technical. He has also liberally patronised almost every educational institution in Maharashtra, whilst in his own State he has especially encouraged local weaving, spinning, and other industrial arts. The Chief is the President of the Deccan Vernacular Translation Society of Poona, and he is taking a leading part in the scheme by which the valuable literature in the English language on various subjects (which is now sealed to those who are ignorant of that language) can be rendered into Marathi and published in such a form as to bring it within easy reach of all who can read the vernacular of Maharashtra. Incidentally it might be mentioned that the Chiefsaheb has taken a very great interest in the Boy Scout Movement which has now become very popular within the State, and last year the Heir Apparent, Shrimat Tatya Saheb, enthusiastically entered into the movement and is now as keen on scouting as any other

youth who has been given the privilege and opportunity of participating in this excellent form of citizen-training.

During his administration, the Chiefsaheb has vastly improved the sanitary condition of almost all the villages and towns in the State. Public roads are within easy reach of every village, and for some time vigorous efforts have been made to connect the capital of Ichalkaranji with a branch line to the Miraj-Kolhapur Railway, which would open facilities for easy transhipment of commercial goods from the rich valley in which the capital town is situated. The Ruler's own simple and economic way of living has not only enabled him to clear his State of a heavy debt and keep it unencumbered, but also to effect many reforms in all the progressive departments of the administration, the agricultural, medical, and forest departments, as well as that of education already referred to, having been greatly improved. Co-operative credit societies are in a more flourishing condition in Ichalkaranji State than in any other in the Deccan, and the resultant benefits to the people in the way of prosperity and thrift have already become very marked. His Public Works Department also has been encouraged to give of its best, and in addition to the stately palace which was erected before the present Ruler took charge, the capital town now has a number of commodious public buildings, such as the High School, the library, the hos-

pitals, the vernacular schools, the clubs, the guest house, the municipal office and many others. The water works at Ichalkaranji have also assured a plentiful supply of good water to all the citizens of the town, and is a scheme the like of which would be difficult to find in many other States. The State has its own health resort, and Madhavgiri has been called by many the Mahableshwar or the Simla of the Ichalkaranji State.

Shrimant Babasaheb has always recognised that no administration can be fully satisfactory unless the Ruler has a very wide outlook, and so for many years he has taken a very close interest in all the literary, political and religious problems of the day. He represented the Sardars and Inamdars of the Deccan in the Bombay Legislative Council for twelve years, and by enlightening them on their rights created a sympathetic atmosphere for a fair constitutional struggle. While in Council he also urged the necessity of making primary education free and compulsory, and worked for the introduction of equal weights and measures so as to check or abolish the many evil practices among merchants which are so detrimental to the poor people. Indeed, his main work in the Council was on questions that involved the interests of the masses, and although he did not see the results at the time, the people have since reaped the harvest of his labour. He was a member of the Senate of the Bombay University for some time. To widen his horizon further, the

Chief took to travelling both in and out of India.He has visited most of the important places of interest in India, and his visits in 1912 to Java, and in 1913 to Great Britain and Ireland, and Europe were not mere pleasure trips. The main object was to study the life and character of the people there from the social, economic, and administrative points of view to enable him to introduce into his State as many reforms as its resources would permit. It might here be mentioned in passing as an indication of the Chiefsaheb's character that he told me quite casually one day that the proudest moment of his life was when he stood shoulder by shoulder with other Indian Princes in London and watched the grand march past of the Allied troops in 1917, a few months before the final day of victory. The Chiefsaheb was also present in 1919 at the Peace celebrations in England, and had the honour of witnessing from the Royal Pavilion the very grand military review and procession of the Allied Powers and Colonies on the occasion of the Victory Pageant.

As a result of his wide experience, the Chief is noted for his way of marshalling arguments in debate, whilst his sterling honesty, his congenial temperament, and his desire to compromise always disarms the most bitter opposition. It is not surprising, in view of these public activities, that the Chiefsaheb has a fine library and has made a hobby of collecting various works of art. He also loves and appreciates music, and

Balkrishna Bowa, the well-known musician of Maharashtra, lived in his court for a number of years.

As a man Shrimant Babasaheb has been no less successful than as a Ruler. He is very devout and religious. He studiously performs all the duties of a Brahmin householder, is full of toleration, and leads a very simple life. But he is a generous host, quick in anticipating the needs of his guests and no less alert in meeting them. In a word, he is a thorough gentleman conforming to the combined standards of nobility of both the East and the West.

Due largely to his active life and the great anxiety with which he has carried on personally the administration of his State, the present condition of the Chief's health is by no means robust. The death of his adopted son, Venkatrao Saheb Ghorpade, M.A. of the Bombay University, came as a very great blow to the Ruler, for it meant that Babasaheb would be compelled to remain the sole director of the administration of the State for another fifteen years. The death of Rao Saheb Ghorpade was undoubtedly due to his labour and overwork in order to fit himself for the task before him. But he has left behind him a son who is now Heir-Apparent. It is too early yet to make any prophecies as to the future capacity and character of this very young Prince, but in view of the fact that his education and upbringing will be under the direct control

of the present Ruler who has had such wide experience and who has demonstrated his own administrative capacity, there seems no doubt whatever that the future of Ichalkaranji will be not one whit less glorious than its present or its past. And since the ladies of the House have played such an important part in its progress and its administration ever since its foundation, no better point could be found with which to close this brief historical review than to record the interesting fact that even to-day one of the most important State departments, namely, the Khasgi and allied sections, has for a long time been in the entire charge of the Ranisaheb, whilst her daughter-in-law, Shrimant Anubaisaheb, is administering the Public Works, Education, Health, Forests, and Local Self-Government Departments, thus sharing the burden of the administration and giving much-needed relief to the aging Chief.